

Egypt suffers first death from bird flu virus

Where parents' money will go this June

Opposition to test Senga guidance by talking to soldiers

Gov't to increase long-term peso bond float by P100B

Militant leaders rage at medal for Palparan



By Luige A. del Puerto

MILITANTS WERE IN AN UP-ROAR yesterday on learning that a controversial general they claimed was a top human rights violator would be decorated for meritorious service at today's Army Day

PALPARAN

MILITANT / A6

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Is entertaining the public illegal? Joker asks cops

By TJ Burgonio and Luige A. del Puerto

SINCE WHEN DID strolling in a black T-shirt by Manila Bay become a crime?

Senators Joker Arroyo and Rodolfo Blazon can't



IS ENTERTAINING / A22

RP most endangered democracy in Asia

By Amando Doronila

AT NO TIME SINCE THE watershed military intervention in Philippine politics in 1986 has the Armed Forces emerged as a pivotal power broker in the country than during the weeks after President

ANALYSIS Macapagal-Arroyo's proclamation of a state of national emergency on Feb. 24.

Ms Arroyo lifted the state of emergency on March 3, but claims that residual threats from those seeking to oust her remain.

From this perspective, it can be said that the Philippines has gone through the crisis of Feb. 24 as the most endangered democracy in Asia among the developing countries that composed the "third wave" of new and restored democracies, including Thailand and Indonesia, in the wake of the collapse of authoritarian regimes in Latin America and Southeast Asia in the 1980s.

Thus, Feb. 24 marked a turning point in the democratization wave that might cause Prof. Samuel P. Huntington to revise his widely accepted treatise on the "third wave" of democratization, using the Philippine deviant experience as a case study of democratization in reverse.

The Philippines' first serious attempt at curtailing democracy since Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law 34 years ago stands in sharp contrast to the redemocratization when Filipinos toppled the Marcos dictatorship with people power 20 years ago.

The events of the past few weeks have proved that the country has again become the fulcrum—the pilot model—of democratic backsliding.

Indeed, the growing role of the military in the enforcement of security measures to strengthen state authority and to prop up a politically beleaguered administration has raised the specter of a crypto-military dictatorship.

People who have been watching news of the tumultuous

RP MOST / A22

DOJ may drop raps vs 3 of 4 GIs in rape

Prosecutor bucks motion questioning VFA legality



DEMONSTRATORS carry empty coffins draped in the US flag during an antiwar march and rally in Hollywood, California.

REUTERS

JUSTICE SECRETARY Raul Gonzalez indicated yesterday that charges may be dropped against three of the four US Marines accused of raping a Filipino woman in November last year as cracks began to show in the legal team handling her case.

"I think not all of them should be charged, but Smith should be charged," Gonzalez said, referring to the principal accused, Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, according to Agence France-Presse (AFP).

Smith faces charges of raping a 22-year-old Filipino woman at the Subic Bay Freeport following a US-Philippine counterterrorism exercise, AFP said.

Accused of conspiring with Smith were Marine SSgt. Chad Carpenter and Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis.

Gonzalez said his department would decide on Smith's appeal to have the rape charge dropped before the arraignment of the accused on March 24 at the Olonapo City court where they would face their accuser and enter a plea.

The court does not have to heed the DOJ's resolution, but it will have strong influence in deciding who will be charged.

The Marines have insisted only one of them had sex with the

DOJ / A8

Protests mark 3rd year of Iraq invasion

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA—ANTIWAR protesters took to the streets around the world, including the Philippines, to demand that American soldiers leave Iraq, on the second day of global protests marking the third anniversary of the US-led invasion.

The demonstrations started Saturday with 500 people chanting antiwar slogans in Sydney and rolled around the world,

with major protests in London and the United States, where more than 1,000 people gathered in New York's Times Square.

However, attendance at the demonstrations was lower than organizers had predicted, and far short of the millions worldwide who protested the initial invasion in March 2003.

In Manila, a left-wing coalition called the Iraq Solidarity Cam-

paign condemned the US military presence in Iraq—and in southern Philippines. About 500 peace activists belonging to the group said they planned a protest march on Monday to the heavily guarded US Embassy, where they planned to pelt President George W. Bush's picture with rotten vegetables.

"Filipino antiwar activists grieve for the growing lists of dead soldiers and civilians, mostly women

and children, as the immoral and unholy war against so-called terrorism rages on, led by US President George 'war freak' Bush," the group said in a statement.

The Philippines banned the deployment of workers to Iraq after insurgents abducted Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz in July 2004. In a bid to save his life, Manila conceded to the kidnappers.

PROTESTS / A23

A witness account of the agony in Milosevic's war

By Fernando del Mundo

(The writer is a former UN staff member who had gone on assignments in the former Yugoslavia, which had broken up into five countries—Serbia-Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Slovenia. He joined the INQUIRER 10 months ago.—Ed.)

SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC PROBABLY never knew that a Filipino was behind some of the more damaging reports of atrocities that prompted NATO to launch an air war on Serbia in the spring of 1999.

The NATO bombing lasted 78 days and led to the downfall of Milosevic, who died last week and was buried Saturday in his hometown of Pozarevac, in Serbia-Montenegro, all that's left of what was previously known as Yugoslavia. (See story at right.)

As a press officer in the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, I was essentially the eyes and ears of the UNHCR on the ground, traveling

to remote villages to find out where aid was needed, reporting on what I had witnessed and bringing foreign correspondents to areas where they had no access.

On the eve of the NATO bombing, CNN ran a story on the Serbian offensive in the town of Srbica in the Serbian province of Kosovo—arena of the third war to engulf the Balkans following the breakup of Yugoslavia. Wars had previously raged in Croatia and Bosnia.

The CNN footage showed houses burning. There was an interview with two ethnic Albanian women, narrating in tears how Serbian police and paramilitary troops had raided Srbica and taken away their husbands.

The entire TV film clip came from the UNHCR: Using a digital camera, I had shot the scenes and conducted the interviews with the help of a driver-interpreter.

When Milosevic saw the CNN story, he fired off a protest to the UNHCR, accusing the office of

A WITNESS / A12



MILOSEVIC'S longtime secretary Mirjana Dragolevic mourns on the marker by the grave of the former Serbian leader in Pozarevac town in Serbia-Montenegro.

Serbian leader buried where he, wife first kissed

POZAREVAC, SERBIA-MONTENEGRO—SLOBODAN Milosevic was laid to rest on Saturday beneath a tree in the backyard of the family estate in his hometown—an anticlimactic end to one of the bloodiest chapters in the history of the turbulent Balkans.

The burial of the late Serbian leader a week after his death while on UN trial for genocide and crimes against humanity followed a tense farewell ceremony in Belgrade that drew at least 80,000 nationalist supporters, and another in his birthplace attended by up to 20,000 admirers.

As a cold drizzle fell, his flag-draped coffin was lowered into a double grave with a place for his widow, Mirjana Markovic, who reportedly wants to join him when she dies.

The grave, marked with a simple marble slab inscribed with both the couple's names in Cyrillic letters and the dates 1941-2006, was dug beneath a favorite linden tree where Milosevic and Markovic first kissed as high school sweethearts.

No immediate members of Milosevic's family attended. But in a letter read out at graveside, Markovic, who lives in self-imposed exile in Moscow because she faces Serbian charges of abuse of power during her husband's 13-year reign, said: "You have come back to our home to

SERBIAN / A13

Queer eye for straight Congress

By Blanche S. Rivera

THEY'RE HERE, THEY'RE QUEER, and they're all set to become a political force.

Running on a platform of antidiscrimination and equal employment opportunity, the Philippines' lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender (LGBT) people are ready to break into the political scene with their entry in the party-list elections next year.

Ang Ladlad, a network of 150 LGBT individuals and counting, plans to file its candidacy for party-list representation in the Commission on Elections in September.

"This is a test case for us. We want to see if Congress, if the Philippines is ready for us," Ang Ladlad's founding chair and top candidate Danton Remoto told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Ang Ladlad includes some members from LEAP (Lesbian Advocates Philippines), Rainbow Rights, Baguio-based Lumina, and members of lesbian and gay groups in the University of the Philippines, Polytechnic University of the Philippines and the University of the East.

QUEER / A22



WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/03/19/06

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

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Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Lanao	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tugaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legaspi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Opposition set to defy Senga

Chiz: Dialogue with troops to push through despite 5-pt directive

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

IN A MOVE THAT COULD PUT TO THE TEST THE five-point guidance issued by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga, the House minority is bent on pushing through with "wider dialogues" with soldiers.

House Minority Leader Francis "Chiz" Escudero yesterday said the aim of the dialogues with the military "in and out of the camp" was "to listen to what they have to say."

He said the dialogues would also allow the opposition in the Lower House to answer charges that had been leveled against them by the administration.

According to Escudero, "soldiers, officers and enlisted men" should also learn that "being [in the] opposition does not make one an enemy of the state."

The talks would also disprove claims by the administration that the opposition had been plotting against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The plan was disclosed by Escudero during deliberations Thursday on the proposed budget of the Department of National Defense.

The Sorogon lawmaker insisted that the House minority had a right to talk to the soldiers since the President herself planned to do so.

He castigated Col. Tristan Kison, the erstwhile AFP spokesperson, for putting his

foot down on the proposal. Kison had said that holding dialogues with soldiers without the approval of the military top brass constituted interference in the chain of command and would be dealt with accordingly.

Escudero said he found Kison's statement "the height of arrogance, especially in relation to a member of this chamber which is supposed to be the highest policy-making body of our government."

To appease Escudero, Rep. Rodolfo Bacani, the sponsor of the DND budget, said the minority could meet with soldiers in various camps subject to "security situations in the area you intend to visit."

Escudero clarified that the minority did not intend to conduct the dialogues for the purpose of politicizing the military.

In issuing the five-point "The Role of the Armed Forces in These Trying Times," Senga reminded soldiers to remain neutral and resist any attempts by politicians to use them for their vested interests.

Escudero pointed out that the politicization of the military was actually caused by the political

process by which promotions and appointments were made within the AFP but leaving too much room for discretion on the part of the appointing authority (President Arroyo).

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz had insisted they were "doing their best to insulate promotion from political interference, and are using performance as a basis for promotion."

Reacting to Senga's five-point guidance, maverick administration Sen. Joker Arroyo yesterday said the military should talk less, cut back on its propaganda and withdraw from the glare of the media.

"They better just keep quiet and return to barracks," he said in an interview.

Arroyo said the military's high-profile stance in the media wasn't helping dispel the belief that it was ready to flex its muscles and intervene in a political turmoil, much less quell the restiveness within its ranks.

"The AFP is very talkative. Every bit of everything is press release," he added.

For Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a former national police chief, the guidance would not help quell the restiveness within the military ranks.

"No amount of five-point guidance will remove the restiveness among military personnel, especially when the central figure in the 'Hello Garci' tape is now the prospective replacement of General Senga while the others were rewarded with the choicest posi-

tions," he said.

Malacañang, however, said the five-point guidance should serve as a "reminder" to politicians and those wanting to bring soldiers to their cause.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the five-point guidance "clearly delineates the role of the military as professional soldiers committed to the chain of com-

mand and the Constitution."

Yesterday, Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio accused Sen. Rodolfo Biazon of agitating the military against the President.

On Friday, Biazon called on soldiers to defend the Constitution, saying "anyone who violates the Constitution is your enemy."

In a text message, Claudio said

that Biazon "practically accuses the President of violating the Constitution."

"If he is quoted correctly, Senator Biazon seems bent on inflaming the political situation and agitating the military against the President and other government authorities," Claudio said. With reports from TJ Burgonio and Luige del Puerto



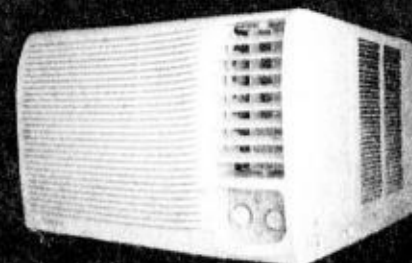
CZECH VISITOR

Senate President Premysl Sobotka of the Czech Republic (left) is welcomed by Senate President Franklin Drilon at Villamor Air Base yesterday. The second highest official in his government, Sobotka and five other Czech senators are here on a four-day visit. They are scheduled to meet with Vice President Noli de Castro, Speaker Jose de Venecia, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and the other Filipino senators.

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Corruption costing RP – CSC exec

By Nelson F. Flores

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONER KARINA Constantino-David has warned that the government's failure to curb corruption would heavily cost the nation's social fabric.

David, a sociologist, issued the warning Friday during the Anti-Corruption Convergence Summit at the Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila. Among the serious costs of failure, she said, would be society's indifference and apathy towards the government. She said these would ultimately lead to cynicism and the destruction of the democratic way of life.

According to David, the people now are slowly becoming indifferent due to the empty promises made about fighting corruption.

She said that for the anticorruption drive to be successful there should be a self-cleansing program in all the government agencies. "Maglinis muna sa sariling bakuran (Let's first clean our own backyards)," David stressed.

During the summit, Ombudsman Mercedes Gutierrez launched the National Anti-Corruption Program of Action (Nacpa), a comprehensive program of action against corruption in government.

"This is just the start of a unified approach in addressing corruption. With the Nacpa, the anticorruption campaign would be coordinated and well-planned," Gutierrez said.

Gutierrez said that through Nacpa, the Office of the Ombudsman would strengthen the coordination of anticorruption programs between the government and civil society groups.

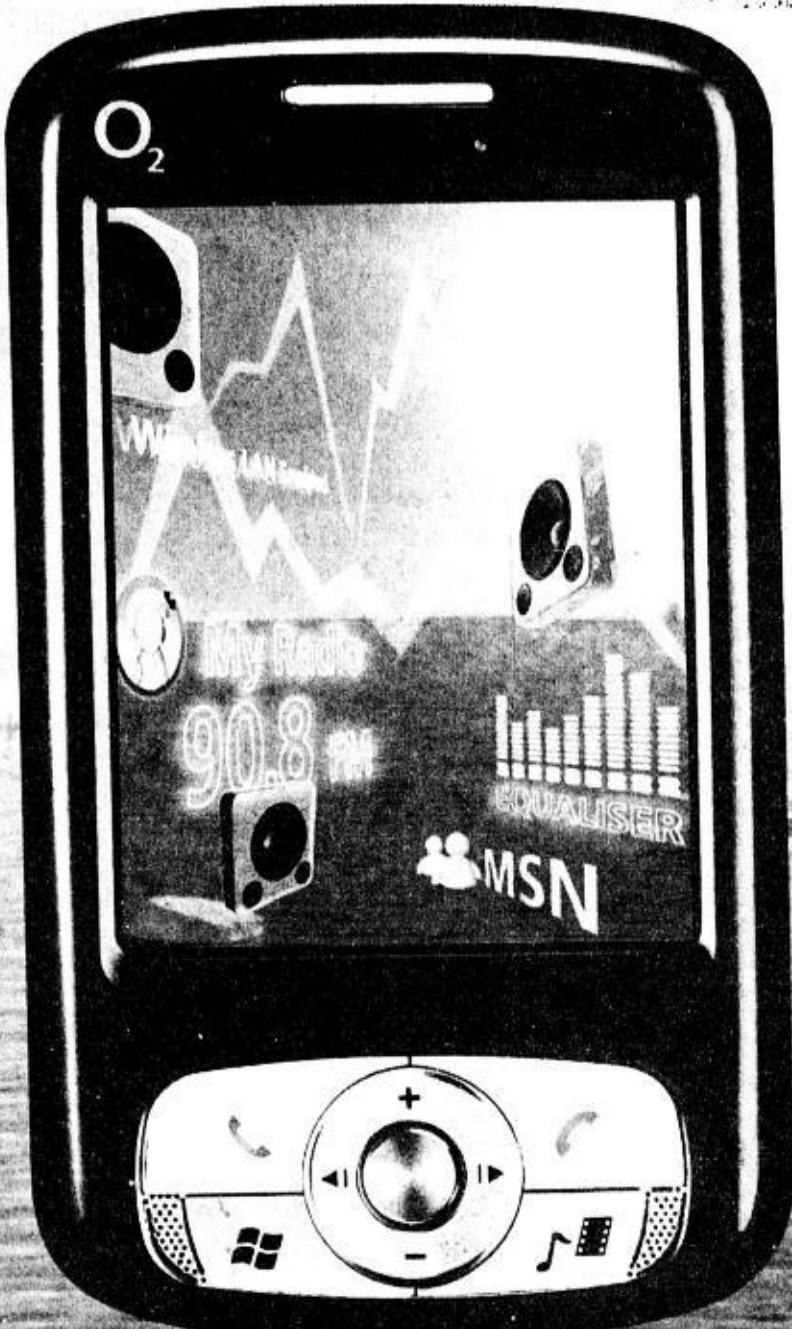
Among Nacpa's programs would be the training of at least 8,000 anticorruption investigators and prosecutors and the sponsorship of anticorruption laws.

Guillermo "Bill" Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club and chair of the Coalition Against Corruption, challenged the Ombudsman to go after corrupt government officials and exercise its independence as an institution.

"We realize that the Office of the Ombudsman is an independent institution.

We look forward that its promises be kept," Luz said.

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Turn to the Experts.SM

Cops admit case vs SAF rebels weak

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE POLICE HAVE ADMITTED THAT THE case against Special Action Force officers implicated in the attempt to unseat President Macapagal-Arroyo was "a little weak."

"In truth, it's a little weak, but we are not prohibited from submitting (additional) evidence during the trial," Director Marcelo Ele Jr., chief of the police Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management, said.

The DIDM, however, has "found probable cause" to recommend administrative summary hearings against Senior Supt. Benjamin Magalong, Chief Insp. Eric Dilag and Insp. Ryan Paloma.

The three officers face charges of grave misconduct. If found guilty, they could be dismissed from the service.

Their former superior, sacked SAF commander Chief Supt. Marcelino Franco, also faces charges of negligence, according to Ele.

"We have found probable cause based on the preponderance of reports (of their involvement)," Ele said on the phone. "But we have no sworn statements (against them). The case is a little weak."

Should they fail to get additional evidence, the police will be pursuing its case against the four SAF officers based on reports tagging them as having had a hand in trying to oust Ms Arroyo.

Police Director General Arturo Lomibao would be assigning a hearing officer to the case, Ele added.

Lomibao earlier said that part of the plan to unseat Ms Arroyo was for the SAF to take over Camp Crame and the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

The SAF men, the most seasoned combatants in the police force, were supposed to take Lomibao and his two top deputies hostage, and force a declaration of a withdrawal of support by the PNP from the Arroyo administration.

The SAF had planned the attack on PNP headquarters and the Naia twice in January—on the 14th and then again on the 18th and 19th, Lomibao said.

The attacks were aborted, on at least one occasion, after Lomibao himself confronted one of the SAF commanders.

There were supposed to be similar moves by two other elite military units—the Philippine Marines and the Army's Scout Rangers, according to Lomibao.

When the plans were aborted, the SAF, Marines and Scout Rangers shifted their focus to joining the protest actions of Feb. 24, the 20th anniversary of the People Power revolution, Lomibao said.

Prelates making it hard for GMA to charm them

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS TO work harder on her "charm offensive" directed at the Catholic Church if she is to overcome the apparent resistance put up by some prelates and priests to being disarmed by Malacañang.

While the President was touching base with several bishops in their dioceses during a recent seven-day sortie, she was unaware that a mobile phone text message was circulating among priests, warning that the visits harbored a "real motive."

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), was the main recipient of the message composed by a priest.

"She is a clever strategist. It is easy to fall into her trap. She will even dangle money. I hope you can alert your colleagues," said the message, a copy of which was forwarded to the INQUIRER.

Another clergyman composed his own warning, which said: "We must remain steadfast and not allow ourselves to be used, especially if the initiative comes from GMA."

The Catholic Church, whose influence in politics is so great it has been a major factor in the downfall of presidents and the rise of new ones, has been opposing a mining law allowing foreigners to exploit the country's mineral resources. Malacañang has hoisted its enactment as an achievement in efforts at economic recovery.

In addition, the Arroyo administration has been buffeted by accusations of electoral fraud, a coup attempt led by military officers in February and, in its aftermath, a crackdown perceived to be accompanied by the trampling of civil liberties.

It therefore came as no surprise that Ms Arroyo took the time last week to visit, one after the other, Archbishop Paciano Aniceto of San Fernando, Pampanga, and Bishops Ramon Villena of Nueva Vizcaya and Arturo Bastes of Sorsogon.

"It was a good gesture on the part of the President to greet the bishops," Bishop Leonardo Medroso of Borongan, Samar, told the INQUIRER. "But why wasn't she doing this before? There must be a motivation. For me, she wanted to court the bishops, to soften their stand on mining and the political issue."

Like Medroso, Bastes and Villena are strongly opposed to mining operations whose ill-effects were condemned by the CBCP in a pastoral letter distributed on Jan. 29.

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UNIVERSITY OF PERPETUAL HELP DALTA (formerly UPHR)

30 years
of Perpetualite Service as
Helpers of God



The First 30 Years: Realizing A Vision

In 1975, in the midst of a decade of rapid urban growth in the southern fringes of Manila, founder **Dr. Antonio Laperal Tamayo** and his wife and co-founder, **Dr. Daisy Moran Tamayo**, together established a much-needed haven of learning within the town of Las Piñas.

Along with their close associate and co-founder, the late **Ernesto Palanca Crisostomo**, they envisioned a premier university rising up in Las Piñas, a once-bucolic town known for its thriving salt industry and the famous Bamboo Organ. They saw a bulwark of academic achievement that would act as "a catalyst for human development", ultimately offering their fellowmen opportunities to pursue a better quality of life.

The University of Perpetual Help Dalta

Dr. Antonio L. Tamayo serves as the University's First President and Chairman of the Board, while Dr. Daisy M. Tamayo serves as its Second President. Both hold Masteral and Doctorate degrees from top institutions here and abroad - Antonio from the prestigious George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and Daisy from New York University.

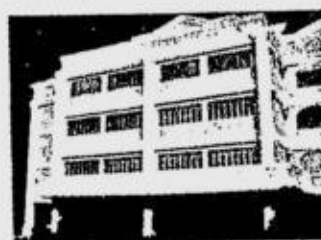
UPH-DALTA and UPH-JONELTA (founded by Antonio's parents, **Drs. Jose and Nena Tamayo**) together formed a consortium known today as the **University of Perpetual Help System**. All together, UPH-DALTA and UPH-JONELTA comprise a total of eight campuses with 40,000 students and four hospitals.

Building National Character

The credo upon which the UPH DALTA has anchored its vision is also its founders' own personal battlecry: "Character Building Is Nation Building". Recognizing the role that an individual's strength of character plays in nation building, Dr. Antonio L. Tamayo passionately asserts that "our young can only be assured of a better tomorrow by building the right kind of character today - respectful, hardworking and committed to the formation of a prosperous and wealthy nation."

Committed to the Ideals of Excellence

Through the years, excellence has been achieved and proven through the many accolades the University has received. The UPHR College of Law, for example, has been declared as one of the 10 Best Law Schools in the Bar Examinations. Numerous graduates consistently take top honors in professional licensure examinations. Even the University's athletic organization has attained the top overall championship in the National College Athletics Association (NCAA) for two consecutive years.



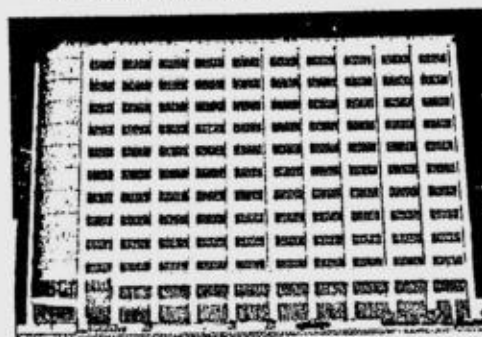
Calamba, Laguna campus



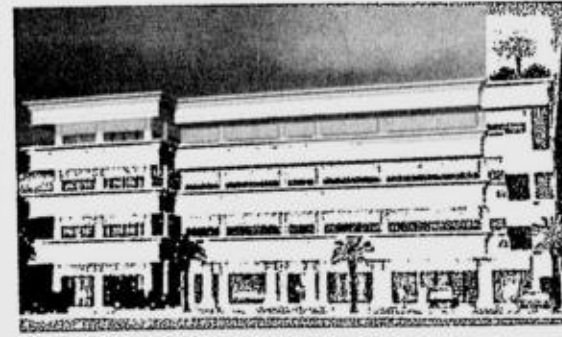
Molina, Cavite campus



Las Piñas campus



University Medical Center
Health Tower



University Mall and Carpark

Aside from its many academic laurels, the University enjoys recognition and accreditation from prestigious institutions. Various courses of the tertiary level are accredited by the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA). The secondary level is accredited by the Philippine Accreditation Association of School, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU). The University was also recently awarded the ISO 9001:2000 for Maritime Programs by the Societe Generale de Surveillance (SGS).

The UPH DALTA offers a total of 72 degree and non-degree programs in various fields such as Graduate programs, Doctor of Medicine, Nursing and other Allied Health Programs, Business, HRM, Tourism, Arts and Sciences, Education, Law, Engineering, Criminology and Maritime Education, Computer and IT, Technical and Vocational Education including Care Giver, Medical Transcription and Automotive Service Training, as well as Basic Education.

Basta Nursing, Perpetual!

As a testament to the excellence of the **Perpetualite Nursing Education**, licensure examination passing rates have reached 100% in the last few years. Foreign job placement networks within the Perpetualite system provide opportunities for immediate employment upon graduation at hospitals in Manila, the United States, the United Kingdom, the Middle East, Japan and other countries.

The Perpetualite Legacy

At the heart of the university's legacy is a calling for Perpetualites to be "Helpers of God." In the spirit of altruism, the students are encouraged and inspired to develop a character of helpfulness - a trait essential in all fields of discipline, but specially manifested in the medical and paramedical fields where students learn how to use their skills to heal their fellowmen; and in business and technology, where they learn the temporal, socio-economic aspects of nation building. This legacy is fostered in the core curriculum, especially in the "Filipino Christian Living" component of the University educational program. As such, the education UPHD provides is **Christian in character and Catholic in doctrine**.



DIGNITY BACK: Perpetual Extension School, New Bilibid Prison, Muntinlupa City. Shown in photo from left: Mr. Raymond Narag, Dr. Daisy M. Tamayo, Dr. Resurreccion Morales, Ms. Bea Zobel and Ms. Baby Bunye.

The Next 30 Years: A New Vision

The vision that began 30 years ago has gained even more momentum with the added corporate expertise of Drs. Antonio and Daisy Tamayo's two sons, Anthony Jose and Richard Antonio. Following in their parents' footsteps, both are academic achievers in their own right - graduating *cum laude* from the University of the Philippines, with Anthony finishing his masters degrees at both Harvard and Northwestern Universities while Richard pursues an MBA and Masters in Hospital Administration. As corporate leaders, they are actively supporting their parents' global thrusts by pursuing linkages and strategic alliances, locally and internationally. This will ensure broader choices and opportunities for graduates of Nursing, HRM and other courses.

Celebrating The Journey

On the occasion of its 30th anniversary, the University wishes to express its gratitude to all its faculty members, officers, students, alumni, employees, the communities it serves, as well as every individual or group that has ever been part of its remarkable journey.

With the blessings of Our Lord Almighty, and the loving guidance of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, this bastion of learning and academic distinction known as the University of Perpetual Help DALTA looks towards the future with pride and confidence, in anticipation of greater things to come.



University of Perpetual Help DALTA System founders Dr. Antonio Laperal Tamayo and Dr. Daisy Moran Tamayo with sons Richard Antonio and Anthony Jose Tamayo.

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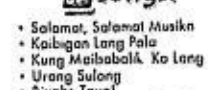
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DOJ may drop raps ...

From page A1

woman and that the act was consensual. Lawyers for Smith and Carpentier have confirmed their appearance at the arraignment, while a lawyer at Silkwood and Duplantis said he is still studying whether to bring his clients to court.

The men are in the custody of the US Embassy. It has refused to hand them over to local authorities, citing a provision in the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) that allows US authorities to keep soldiers in their custody during legal proceedings.

In Olongapo, Prosecutor Prudencio Jalandoni called the INQUIRER to say he was not supporting the omnibus motion filed by the woman's private lawyers—Evalyn Ursua, Honora-Aquino and Anna Liza Gonzales.

The motion, filed on Friday, asked Olongapo Judge Renato Dilag to declare Article 5, Paragraph 6, of the VFA unconstitutional. This states that the custody of the accused resides in the US military and outlines the one-year window to resolve judicial proceedings involving American military personnel.

The Philippine Senate approved the VFA in 1999.

The custody and jurisdiction issues have prompted Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago and several senators to seek the abrogation of the agreement.

Fear of delays

"I will not join [the motion] because it will just delay the proceedings," Jalandoni said.

He said the Supreme Court had upheld the constitutionality of the VFA "in its entirety."

He said his nonconfirmation of the private lawyers' motion would prompt the judge to deny the motion.

Jalandoni said he was following the instruction of Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño that "it was not right to defer the proceedings on the basis of a question on the constitutionality of the VFA."

"What we want is a speedy trial," he said.

Jalandoni said he wanted the March 24 arraignment set by Dilag to proceed as scheduled.

However, the private lawyers, in their motion, asked for a deferment of the arraignment until the questions of custody and jurisdiction were settled.

They also moved for the issuance of an "alias warrant of arrest" to substitute Dilag's Jan. 13 warrant.

Procedural issues

Zuño returned the Jan. 13 warrant to Dilag after the US government on Jan. 16 formally acknowledged custody of the accused.

Dilag later recalled the warrant, saying that "by submitting themselves to the custody of the US Embassy, [the accused] are deemed to have surrendered to the proper authorities."

The woman's lawyers said the VFA provision that they questioned effectively amended the court's rules of criminal procedure on arrest, bail, arraignment and trial, among other things.

"Against this factual backdrop arises the legal question as to whether the VFA has effectively amended our rules of criminal procedure, thereby infringing on the Supreme Court's exclusive power to promulgate rules of practice and procedure in all courts as provided under the Philippine Constitution," part of the 22-page motion said.

The woman's lawyers said that "without acquiring physical jurisdiction over the accused, this court will have no jurisdiction to continue with the proceedings in this case."

They said a copy of the motion was furnished the Office of the Solicitor General because the matter involved legal questions.

The lawyers also said the US Embassy in Manila, where the four soldiers are being held, is "not an office of the Philippine government, nor is it under the authority of this court."

Even the premises of the US Embassy are "not part" of Philippine territory, they said.

The situation, they said, was "aggravated further" by the one-year period set by the VFA to resolve criminal cases.

Due process

The woman's lawyers said their client's right to due process had also been violated because the court was denied custody of the accused.

This has made her a "second-class citizen" in her own country as a "privileged treatment" is given to the US military personnel, they said.

The motion has been set for hearing on March 22 or two days before the arraignment. Reports from AFP, Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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Students demand say in any tuition hikes

By Alcuin Papa

MILITANT STUDENTS HAVE ACCUSED THE Commission on Higher Education (CHED) of favoring private universities when it allowed them to raise their tuition this coming school year without consulting the students.

College Editors Guild of the Philippines president Jose Cosido said that based on their latest statistics, fewer than 10 of 82 private colleges and universities had applied for tuition increases higher than the prevailing inflation rate of 7.4 percent.

This means, Cosido said, that more than 70 schools will automatically raise their tuition even without prior consultation with their students.

Under CHED Memorandum No. 14, colleges and universities could automatically raise their tuition and other fees without consulting their students as long as the increase would not be higher than the prevailing inflation rate.

Cosido accused CHED of being an unwitting ally of school owners who take advantage of the loophole in the memorandum to avoid having to consult with their students.

National Union of Students in the Philippines (NUSP) president Marco de los Reyes said that instead of safeguarding the interest of the students, CHED Memorandum 14 is being used to justify tuition increases.

De los Reyes said the use of the inflation rate as the benchmark for the rate of tuition and other fee increases had allowed school owners to increase tuition and other fees at will.

He said the students are not able to contest the increases.

"NUSP stands firm that schools must still consult with their students regardless of the rate of increase of tuition and other

fees," De los Reyes said.

Raymond Palatino of the Kabataan party-list group urged CHED to "take an active role in ensuring that the rights of the students are respected, especially

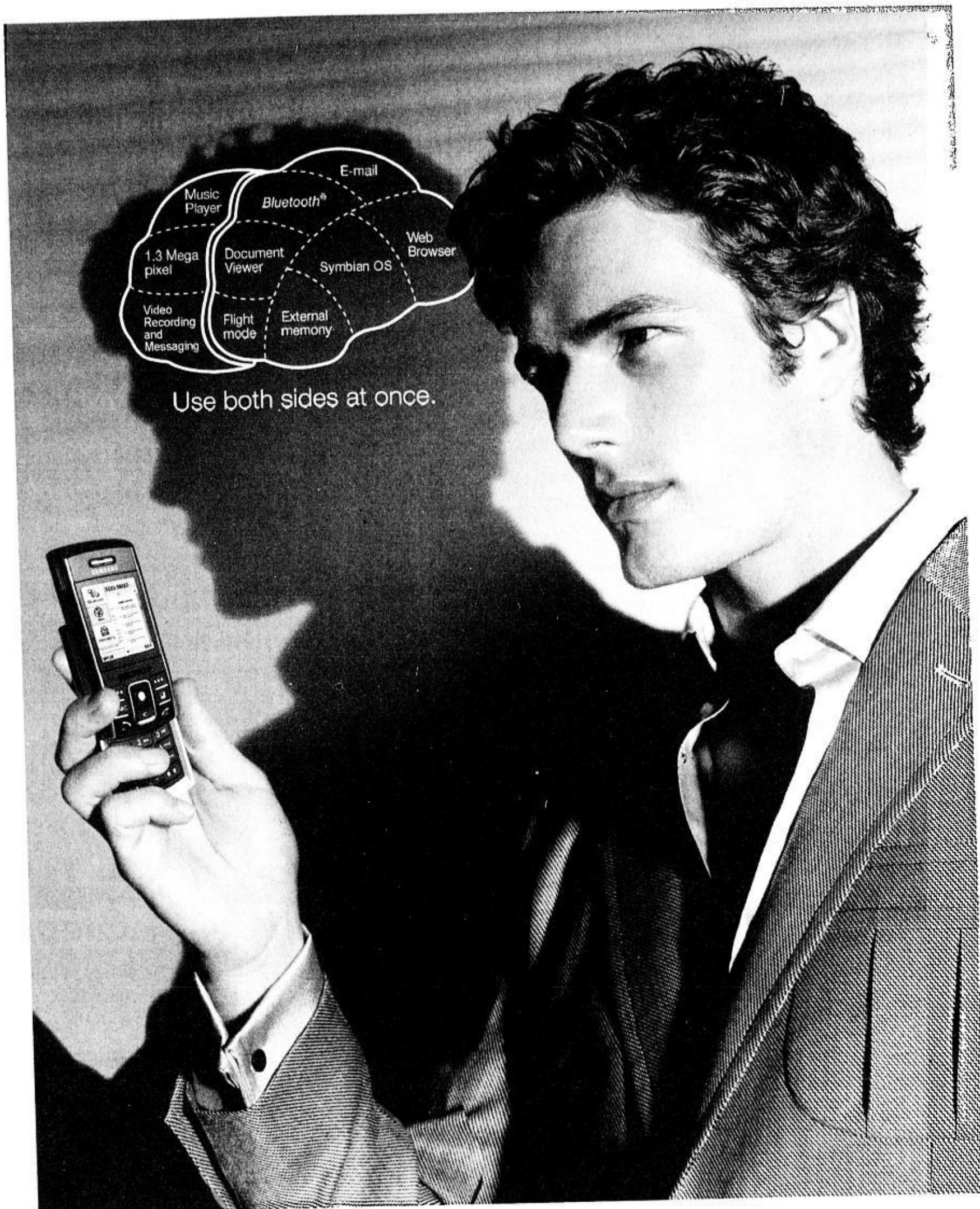
regarding student consultations.

"We demand that CHED Memorandum No. 14 be reviewed, now that its antistudent provisions are already being exposed and opposed by the students."

Militant students have set up Tuition Monitor (TM) where student councils and parents can text or call in their complaints to the TM Hotline 0915-892-2055.

The students hope the campaign will

allow them to keep a tight watch on schools, form a broad unity against unabated tuition and other increases, and demand a moratorium on further increases next school year.



THE DAILY GOSPEL



Monday, March 20, 2006

Joseph, Husband of Mary

1st Reading: 2 S 7:4-5, 12-14, 16

2nd Reading: Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22

Gospel: Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24 (or Luke 2:41-51)

Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and from her came Jesus who is called the Christ-the Messiah.

This is how Jesus Christ was born. Mary his mother had been given to Joseph in marriage but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

Then Joseph, her husband, made plans to divorce her in all secrecy. He was an upright man, and in no way did he want to discredit her.

While he was pondering over this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. She has conceived by the Holy Spirit, and now she will bear a son. You shall call him 'Jesus' for he will save his people from their sins."

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do and he took his wife to his home.

Commentary

Though having a lineage fit for royalty—being a descendant of David—we find Joseph to be a very humble man. He is a silent person, not given to many words, and yet he is a presence that inspires. It is this same presence and humility that inspired Mary and Jesus himself. This stems from an energy that finds its source in God with whom Joseph had constant communication. And it doesn't end there, for Joseph listens and responds and trusts. Do we have that communication with God? Do we listen, respond and trust? Are we a presence that inspires?

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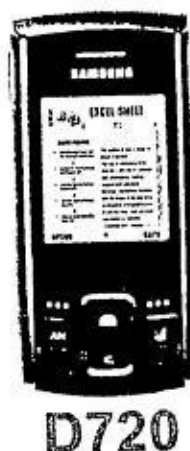
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Fewer jobless with new definition - TUCP

THE TRADE UNION Congress of the Philippines has criticized the government's use of a new definition for the word "unemployed" that purportedly led to over one million jobless Filipinos being excluded from its count, resulting in a lower unemployment rate.

TUCP general secretary Ernesto Herrera said the group reviewed the results of the January 2006 National Labor Force Survey and found that 1.1 million Filipinos who were out of work were not included in the unemployment count.

"Government should call a spade a spade and avoid window-dressing national unemployment statistics," said Herrera, a former senator.

According to a TUCP statement, the government officially redefined "unemployed" in October 2004 through a National Statistical Coordination Board resolution, which the National Statistics Office adopted in April 2005.

The new definition of "unemployed" covers people aged 15 and above who meet three criteria: They are without work; they are willing to work, and they are either seeking work or not seeking it for valid reasons.

The old definition listed only two criteria: Those without work and those who are seeking work or not seeking it due to valid reasons.

Based on the new more stringent definition, the NSO's National Labor Force Survey determined that 2.8 million Filipinos were unemployed in January 2006, translating to an 8.1 percent unemployment rate.

Herrera said the NSO itself acknowledged that if the old definition had been used in the survey, 3.9 million Filipinos would have been considered unemployed in January 2006 and the unemployment rate would have been 10.7 percent.

Herrera said the government should review and revise the official definition of "unemployed" to accurately reflect prevailing labor market conditions. Leila B. Salaverria

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A witness account of the agony in Milosevic's war

From page A1

provoking the Nato bombing. I learned about Milosevic's protest when I was already in Skopje, the capital of Macedonia, where all the UN staffers in Kosovo had been evacuated on the eve of the beginning of the Nato air strikes on March 24, 1999.

The air war doomed Milosevic whose rise to power as an icon of Serb nationalism began in Kosovo at the expense of the tortured ethnic Albanians.

The UNHCR played a major role during the war in the Balkans, leading convoys that delivered humanitarian aid to besieged villages, reporting to the United Nations on atrocities its staff witnessed in the process.

Collapse of Krajina

I first went to the former Yugoslavia in 1992, helping evacuate Croatian deserters, joining a team that mapped out convoy routes, working during emergencies as a stop-gap field officer.



SUPPORTERS of Slobodan Milosevic hold up his picture behind a police line, while attending a memorial service for the late Serbian president in Belgrade. AFP

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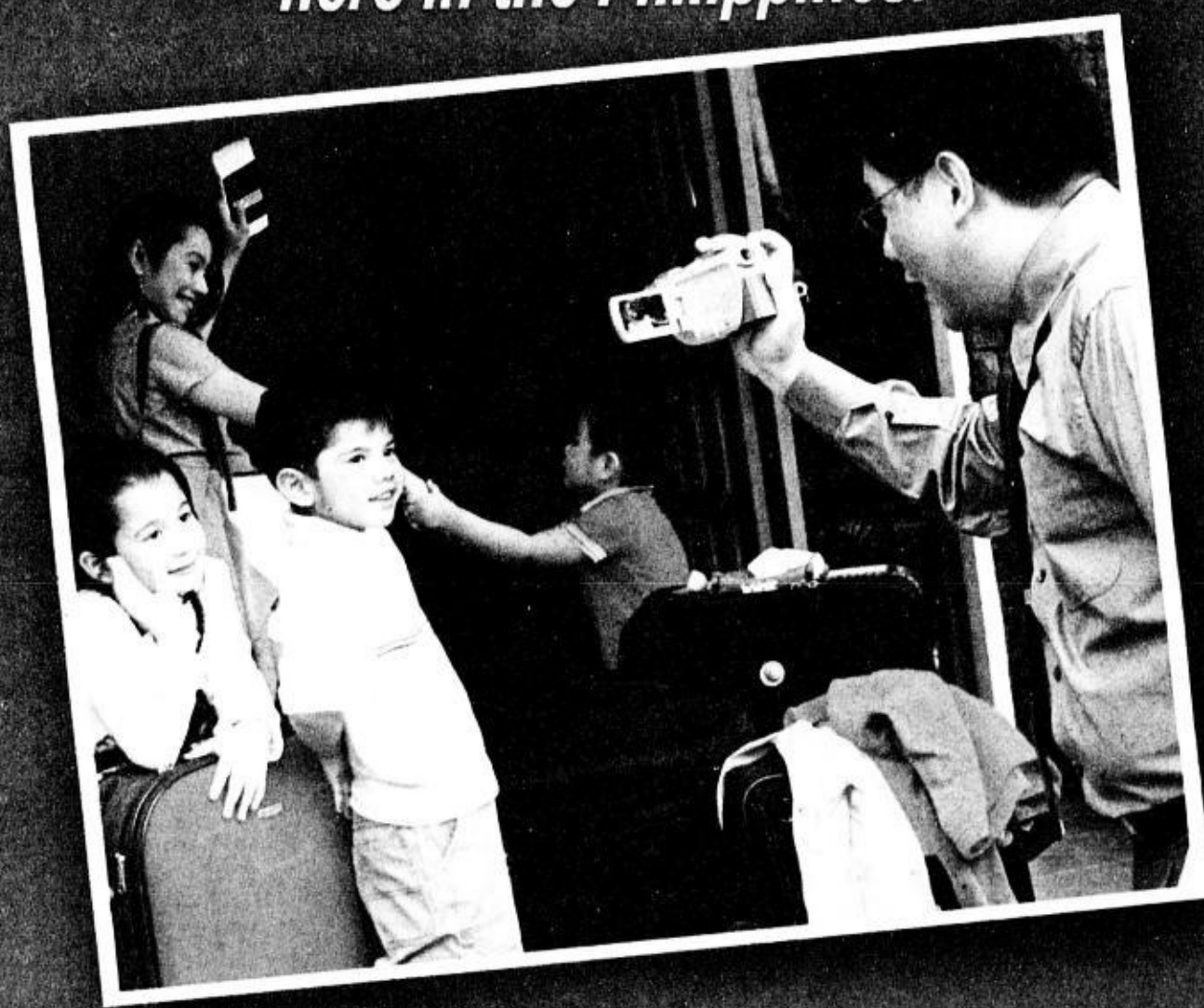
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I was there in August 1995 after the collapse of the Serb enclave in Krajina following the Croatian invasion that prompted 200,000 Serbs to flee—many of them packed in trains to populate Kosovo. That was when reports of Serb atrocities in the area first surfaced.

I went to Bosnia in 1995 following the fall of Srebrenica, a Muslim enclave supposedly under UN protection, where 8,000 Albanian men were massacred while trying to escape.

One of the most emotional moments I witnessed during the war was in Tuzla, where we pitched tents on an airfield for the women survivors of Srebrenica.

'Where were you?'

The then High Commissioner, Sadako Ogata of Japan, had gone to the airfield to talk to the refugees, victims of one of the world's worst ethnic conflicts that emerged at the close of the Cold War era.

The women came to Ogata, crying, arms outstretched, "Where were you when we needed you."

Albanian men who had escaped the Serb encirclement of Srebrenica had gone to the airfield. I talked to some of them, many showing swollen feet from traveling barefoot in the forest, and alerted reporters to their plight.

I arrived in Kosovo in August of 1998 at the height of the civil war in the province shortly after Milosevic agreed to allow humanitarian agencies free access to war-affected people.

War at summertime

It was still summertime and fruits and vegetables were plentiful. But signs of war were everywhere—rotting crops, the carcasses of machine-gunned livestock, clusters of ruined stone houses, thousands of Albanians sheltered in tents in the forested hills or on the road in carts and cars.

What I saw were scenes straight out of Dante's Inferno.

Here are some entries in my Kosovo diary:

• Aug. 29, 1998—Senik is still in flames. Tractor-trailers filled with food and personal possessions are ablaze. At least 17 people are killed. The villagers ask us to stay on to deter snipers as they bury their dead in the rain.

One of the victims is a 2-week-old baby who died of starvation because her wounded mother could not feed her.

Under shell fire

• Sept. 9, 1998—Thousands of people have fled to the Pec region. A colleague and I try to estimate numbers packed into cars, carts and tractor-trailers bumper-to-bumper but we give up after walking 3 km.

Shell fire is getting nearer and an old man begs, "Please, could you do something to stop the shelling?" As we leave, soldiers and tanks are gathering a few kilometers away. When we return the next day, all the people have gone.

• Sept. 25, 1998—A military offensive is at its height. Houses are on fire in villages in central Kosovo. We pass a convoy of government trucks with signs pasted on them "Social Humanitarian Aid of Kosovo."

The wind whips up the tarpaulin on one truck, revealing blue uniformed police crammed inside.

Like Manila at wartime

• Dec. 4, 1998—All but two houses in the village of Lodja have been destroyed by warplanes, artillery and mortar fire. The mayhem is reminiscent of sepia photographs of Manila during World War II.

A sign in Serbian is scrawled on a wall at the entrance to the village that roughly translates "Lodja does not exist anymore."

• Jan. 16, 1999—Forty-five people are massacred in the village of Racak in Stimlje during the Serb sweep. The strikes are triggered by assaults of the rebel Kosovo Liberation Army on policemen and the kidnapping of eight soldiers and five Serb civilians.

More than 30,000 ethnic Albanians are again on the move. There is no sign of a political breakthrough and there are again threats of Nato airstrikes.

After Racak, I knew time was ticking for Milosevic and each story of atrocities reported out of Kosovo was shortening the fuse of the bomb for him.

Serbian leader buried where he, wife first kissed

From page A1

rest in the place you loved the most."
"You lost your life while fighting for noble causes. You were killed by villains. But I know you will live forever for all who wish to live like human beings," her letter said.

A letter from the couple's son, Marko Milosevic, expressed hope that the late president's death would "sober up the humiliated Serb people."

"To die for one's country means to live forever," his letter said.

No priest officiated at the interment because Milosevic was an avowed atheist.

Among the supporters in Pozarevac were several indicted war crimes suspects on temporary leave from the UN tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands. One such supporter, retired Gen. Dragoljub Ojdanic, wore his military uniform.

After the burial, residents of the gritty industrial town 50 km south of the capital waited in a long line to view the grave, which was framed by a crimson carpet and brass stands holding red velvet ropes.

In Belgrade, die-hard supporters—many bused in by Milosevic's Socialist Party from Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo, where he started wars that led to Yugoslavia's bloody 1990s breakup—packed a square in front of the federal parliament building in Belgrade.

Many wept uncontrollably and chanted "Slobo! Slobo!" at the sight of the flag-draped coffin on a bier atop a red-carpeted stage. Some clutched photographs of Milosevic or the UN court's two most-wanted fugitives: Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and his wartime military chief, Gen. Ratko Mladic.

Authorities refused to approve an official ceremony, but Saturday's farewell—organized by the Socialists and technically private—had some of the trappings of a state funeral.

Smaller funeral

But the crowd in Belgrade, though larger than many had expected, was far smaller than the 500,000 who turned out for the 2003 funeral of assassinated Serbian Premier Zoran Djindjic, who had sent Milosevic to the tribunal two years earlier.

Milosevic died March 11 in his room in a detention center near the tribunal, which was trying him on 66 counts of war crimes, including genocide. He was the first head of state to be extradited by his country for trial by the UN court.

Ultrationalist leaders and at least five retired ex-Yugoslav Army generals wearing parade uniforms stood by the stage.

"We are bidding farewell to the best one among us, fully conscious of his greatness," Socialist deputy president Milorad Vucelic said.

Bosko Nikolic, 42, holding a huge poster of Milosevic, said: "I came to say goodbye to the greatest son of Serbia."

But some drivers passing by the square honked their horns and made obscene gestures at the Milosevic supporters, underscoring the disgust many Serbs feel toward the late autocratic president.

'Murder glorified'

"All of Belgrade's squares would be too small for all the victims of Milosevic and his rule," said Foreign Minister Vuk Draskovic, twice targeted for assassination by the

regime. "A murderer and his crimes were glorified today."

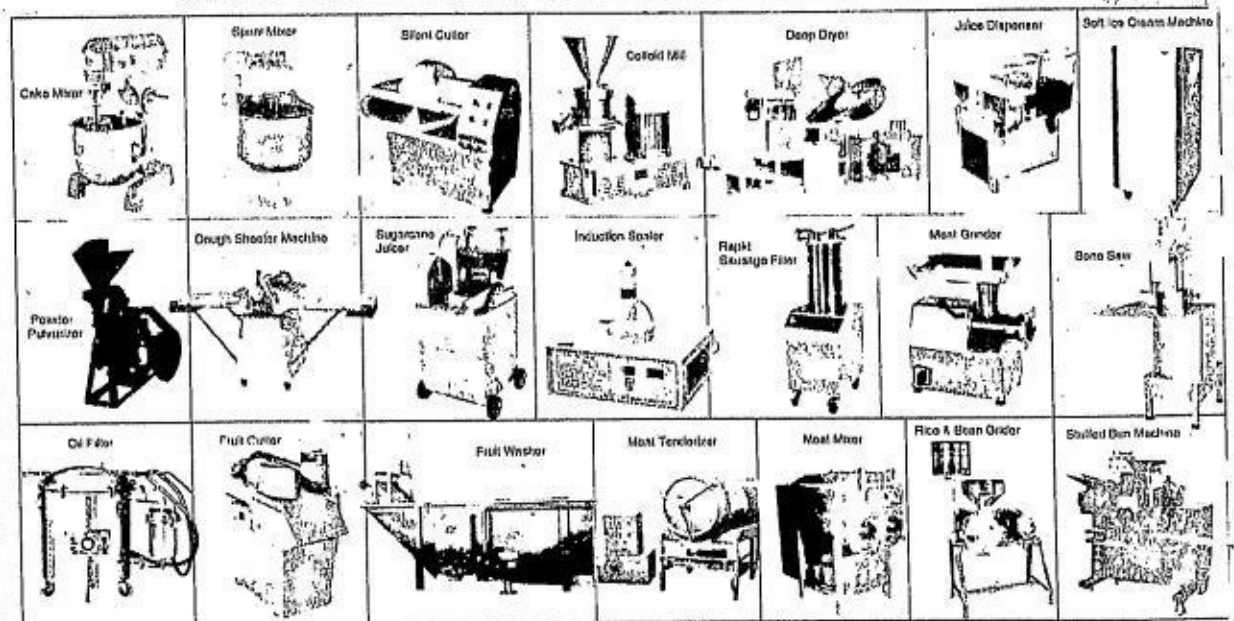
Among the speakers at the ceremony was Ramsey Clark, a former US attorney general and longtime Milosevic supporter who is now on Saddam Hussein's defense team. "History will prove that Slobodan Milosevic was right," Clark said, drawing cheers.

Later Saturday, about 2,000 anti-Milosevic activists gathered at another central Belgrade square for an impromptu rally.

The activists, mostly young people, waved red balloons, whistled, danced and shouted: "He is gone!" They also burned Milosevic's picture and scuffled briefly with a dozen Karadzic supporters who tried to disrupt the gathering.

Milosevic's Socialists and ultrationalists, ousted from power along with Milosevic in 2000, hoped to make political gains from their leader's death. **AP**

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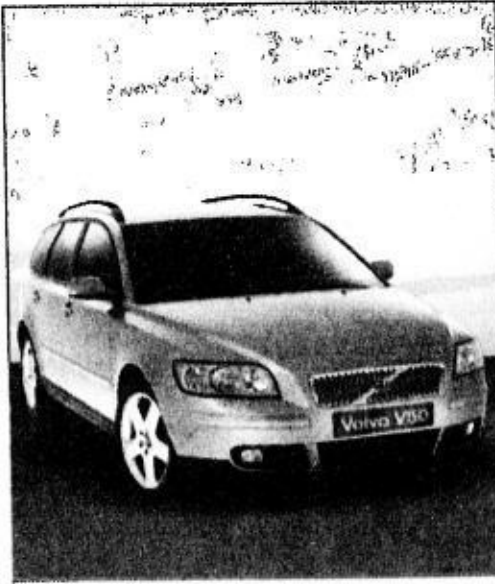
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Senga's blind side

THE ARMED FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF HAS ISSUED a memorandum to his service commanders, ordering them to remind the men and women in their commands to inoculate the military against the virus of politics. But in defining the soldier's role in the country's democratic project, Gen. Generoso Senga failed to consider the main source of political pressure in "these trying times": the incumbent administration.

EDITORIALS

The directive is welcome, no question about it. "As mandated, we must remain apolitical," Senga writes. The five guidelines he offers, beginning with a reiteration of the constitutional principle of "supremacy of civilian authority over the military," are on point; they also have the advantage of being clearly stated. They end with a ringing formula, what we can call the Senga doctrine: "We are not to be regarded as a potent political force to be used by politicians in the furtherance of their vested interests."

Amen to that. But the middle guidelines, as they are phrased, reveal Senga's blind side. He defines political intervention as "a license to wrest leadership of the government" (second guideline) or "an unrestrained license to engage in partisan politics or publicly speak our minds against the government" (third). The phrasing makes it seem that political intervention is a one-way street, in the general direction of the presidential palace.

But it is also political intervention if the armed forces are used by the administration to protect the President's votes (and only hers). It is also political intervention if soldiers or officers speak their minds against the opposition (this is different, it bears emphasizing, from defending or explaining current policy, which is a necessity). It is political intervention if the AFP is used (whether against its will or with its full participation) to blame, cripple or defame the leadership of the opposition.

The President's continuing crisis of legitimacy is rooted precisely in the possible abuse of resources of the government—including those of the armed forces—first, in alleged election fraud and then in an alleged vast conspiracy to cover up. Senga's directive thus misses a sixth guideline: "We in the AFP are constitutionally mandated to be neutral; in these trying times, we cannot be seen as being neutral for the administration."

Biazon's folly

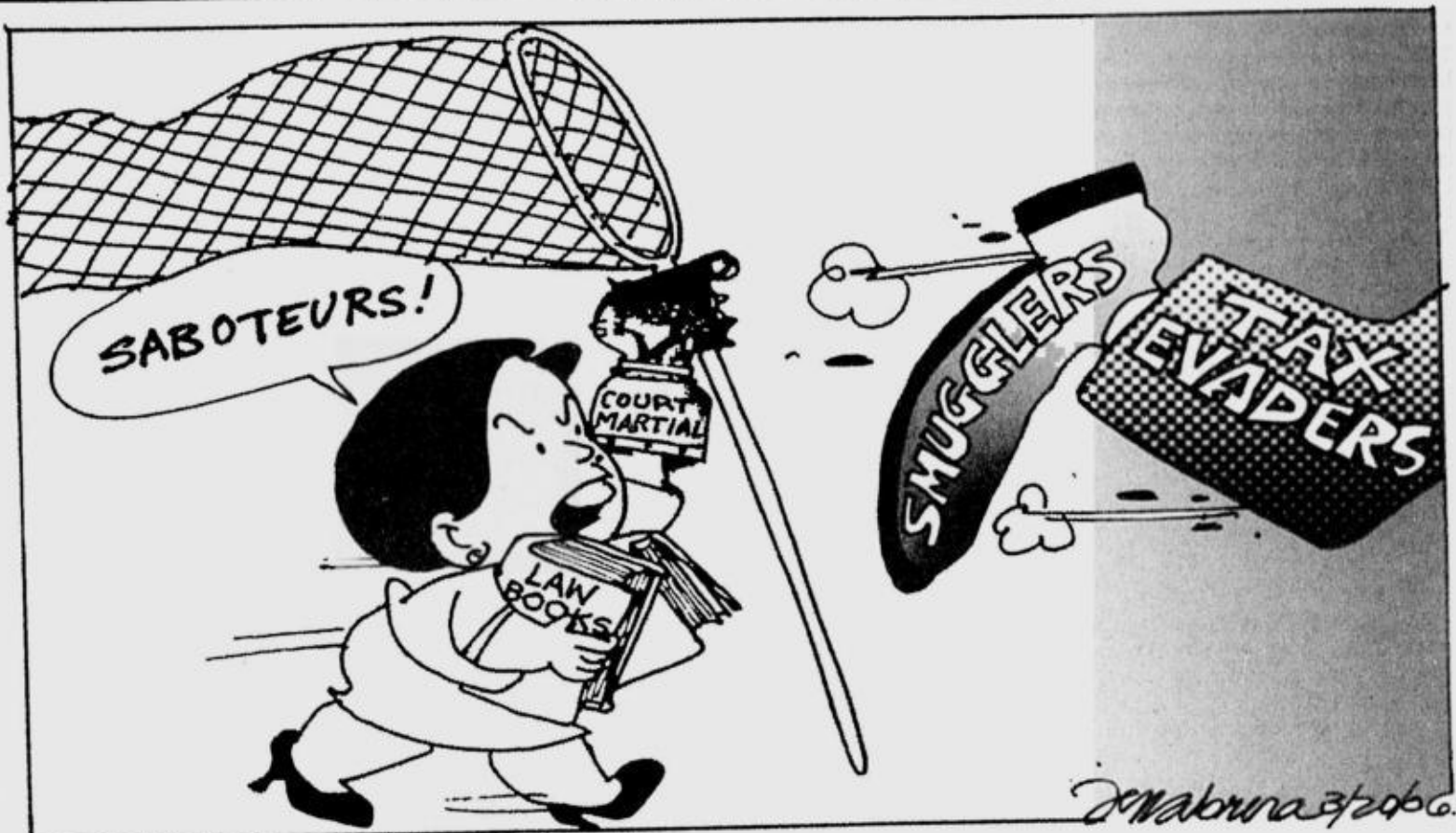
IN 1999, WHEN SEN. RODOLFO BIAZON WAS STILL on the side of the powers that be, some of his colleagues in the Senate joined a Supreme Court petition to declare the newly ratified Visiting Forces Agreement he had championed as unconstitutional.

If any of his colleagues (say Raul Roco or Teofisto Guingona Jr. or Sergio Osmeña III) had, at that time—with the intensity of conviction—called on the Armed Forces of the Philippines to "defend the Constitution" being violated (to name only a few of the respondents in the case) by President Joseph Estrada, Senate President Franklin Drilon, Senate foreign committee chair Blas Ople and Biazon himself, as Senate defense committee chair, the resulting tidal wave of laughter would have drowned them in public ridicule.

We cannot imagine any of the anti-VFA advocates then (many of whom believe until now that the agreement is unconstitutional, despite the Supreme Court's favorable decision) inviting the military to get involved in the issue simply because, as Biazon told INQUIRER editors last week, "anyone who violates the Constitution is your enemy." They would have been attacked, and rightly so, for imperiling the democratic project.

Seven years later, a desperate Biazon finds himself on the outs with the current administration; in his desperation, he has now issued a virtual invitation to the military to consider those whom he accuses of violating the Constitution as "your enemy." Why even wait for those tardy cowards in the Supreme Court to declare, say, Proclamation 1017 unconstitutional? That is only so much legal gobbledygook. From where he sits today, Biazon wants all soldiers to consider their commander in chief as the enemy, on his say-so.

We have repeatedly attacked President Macapagal-Arroyo's increasing use of Marcosian tactics, such as Proclamation No. 1017, Executive Order 464, and the so-called calibrated preemptive response policy. But we have always drawn the line at a military resolution to the political problem. We are sorry to see Biazon carelessly open the back door to military intervention.



GMA and friends also took a stroll at Baywalk

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT YOU CAN NOW BE arrested for just walking on the sidewalk wearing a black T-shirt. You can't even watch the famous Manila Bay sunset and enjoy the fresh sea breeze at the Baywalk—which took Mayor Lito Atienza millions of pesos in taxpayers' money to build, just so Metro Manilans can enjoy a leisurely stroll by the sea—without running the risk of being arrested by the police and imprisoned for up to 12 years. We never faced such risk even during the darkest days of Marcos' martial law regime. But we do now, in this administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo. Last Friday, Former Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman was arrested and detained for five hours as she went strolling at the seaside Baywalk.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said Dinky violated not one but three laws: the Illegal Assembly Law, Batas Pambansa 880 and the Local Government Code. Just for walking beside the sea?

I know it is now dangerous to walk the streets of Metro Manila, especially if you are wearing black. The drivers, most of whom are probably former pilots, might not see you. (This probably explains why the local airlines are losing pilots—who, apparently, now prefer to drive jeepneys instead. After all, it's more exciting than flying a jet fighter.) But I didn't know that the danger includes being arrested for violating three laws.

"They had no permit," said Police Chief Supt. Arturo Paglinawan. You now need a permit to take a stroll on Manila's Baywalk?

"If they were just out for a stroll at the Baywalk," Paglinawan said by way of clarification, "why would they be wearing (similar) T-shirts?" So, it is now also illegal to wear similar T-shirts? Schools, companies, sports teams, candidates, product advertisers, military and police outfits all give out T-shirts with the same markings. Will their wearers now be arrested? Suppose Malacañang gives to residents of Payatas T-shirts imprinted with "I support GMA," and tells them to take a stroll at the Baywalk, and they do, will they be arrested?

Dinky and her fellow promenaders were

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

wearing black T-shirts with the sign "Patalsikin na. Now na" (Out now). But there was no mention of whom to oust. They were not carrying any placards or posters; neither were they chanting anything nor making any speeches.

But Secretary Gonzalez said, "They were clearly staging a rally with their distinctive shirts and thumbs-down signs." Former President Fidel V. Ramos has the habit of making any group he's with flash the thumbs-up sign while saying "Kaya natin ito." (He doesn't say *kung sino ang kaya niya*.) Will he now be arrested for doing this? I would like to see that. Or is the illegality limited to thumbs-down signs but not to thumbs-up signs?

And doesn't the police know that black is now a fashionable color for shirts? In fact, some elite military and police units have black uniforms. And there are innumerable T-shirts with the same markings.

Anybody who goes to New York comes back with a T-shirt that says "I Love NY." Or go to any mall or flea market and you can buy shirts with imprints of the Beatles or of one of the more popular entertainers. Are all these shirts now outlawed?

Police said Dinky and her friends had gathered at coffee shops and restaurants, then donned the black T-shirts and were on their way to take a stroll at the Baywalk. If she was alone or with only a few friends, they said, she would not have been arrested. But she had about 50 friends with her, they added.

So now it is prohibited to take a stroll with many friends at the Baywalk? I remember that President Arroyo herself, not so long ago, took a stroll at the same Baywalk with her family, yayas and alalays, sipsips and media peo-

ple—not to mention the security personnel—for photoops. That was quite a crowd. If she did the same thing again, would she be arrested? What was the difference between GMA's stroll at the Baywalk and Dinky's?

The similarly marked T-shirts Dinky's group wore? But isn't it common practice to distribute T-shirts with the same marks at gatherings in Luneta (Alay-Lakad, for instance) and then have those wearing the shirts walk along Roxas Boulevard? The practice was all right for others but not for the members of Dinky's group? Why?

Aha, because Dinky's T-shirts say "Patalsikin na."

Although there was no name on the T-shirts, it could be said that "Patalsikin na" might have been referring to GMA. But the phrase could as well be referring to corrupt officials, smugglers, rebel soldiers, drug traffickers in government—all of whom the President has declared war on. Isn't that an expression of support for her?

If only this administration were as tough with corrupt people, smugglers, drug traffickers and traffic violators as it is with Dinky's promenaders, we would be free of these scourges already.

But why is the Arroyo administration paying special attention to Dinky? Somebody said it could be because she is of the same height as GMA. (Does that mean that Sen. Juan Flavio should watch out?) Another said, it could be because somebody powerful cannot stand Dinky's hair accessories. That's a more likely explanation.

Just one more question: If the Baywalk promenaders, wearing the same black T-shirts with the same markings were led by Mike Defensor or Ignacio Bunye, or were composed of members of the LP-Atienza Wing, would the police have arrested them?

TODAY'S JOKE:

GMA: That Pulse Asia survey saying that 65 percent of Filipinos want me to resign can't be true. Look at all those people waving at me.

DEFENSOR: But Ma'am, don't you see they are all waving with their middle fingers?

Dreams

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



our target audience to stay away at the last minute. They did not. Some people, especially the TV reporters, asked me why there were politicians there. I answered: Because I invited them. I did say in my column everyone was welcome whatever their creed, color, or (preferred) gender. Everybody at least that professed to hate dictatorship and love freedom. The invitation extended even to Mike Defensor, though I could not have guaranteed his safety. Someone there told me he remembered Defensor when he was still a student activist exhorting fellow students to rise up against the Marcos dictatorship.

But the throng that gathered there warmed the heart and misted the eyes. Which brings me to the second question: How did we pull it off? I have no idea. It was just pure magic.

Someone would tell me later it happened because everybody wanted it to happen. Another one would tell me later it happened because it was an idea waiting to happen. Still somebody would tell me later, "Pare, I think you touched a chord with that line, 'I believe in the power of music, I do not believe in the music of power.'" Good to know that even if I'm not a musician, I touch chords.

It began a couple of weeks before the event. I broached the idea to my friend Pancho Lara, who also helped put up our concert for press freedom in 1999 at the Bahay ng Alumni. His friend Oya Arriola suggested June Rodriguez, a veteran organizer who never stopped serving the people. We got in touch with Joel Saracho, the "emcee ng bayan," and held a meeting a couple of days later. From there it took a life of its own.

Everything just conspired to make it possible. If ever there was a conspiracy, divine and hu-

man, it was that. I cannot, however, give Raul Gonzalez the exact address of God if he should choose to issue an arrest warrant for Him, I am not in the possession of any such information.

It was enough to make you believe in Providence. People gave freely, and every time we thought we'd fall short of what we needed, something would suddenly turn up. Someone from out of the blue asked us during the concert how much more we needed and plunked down the cash before our flabbergasted eyes. She did not want to be mentioned, she was just an ordinary citizen, she said.

The stage was magnificent, I have to thank the events organizers we hired for it; they did an exceedingly professional job. The sound system was even more magnificent, donated by people who too would like their generosity to be noted only by heaven. Miraculously, I did not get visited by my perpetual scourge, gout, though I had been drinking nearly every night for the last two weeks while meeting with the musicians and volunteers. (That's a very good excuse!) Many more bands wanted to play, except that some of them had out-of-town gigs that day and we cut off the number of participants at a little past 30. As it was, we had an absolute surfeit of talent. I had worried about the weather some days before because it was always raining in late afternoon; but, lo and behold, God even donated a full moon that night.

I've not seen an event like this where I felt no bad vibes altogether. There was no note, or whisper, or shadow, of discord that night. Everybody was happy. The musicians were happy, the organizers were happy, the contributors were happy, the crowd was happy, the UP police and bouncers were happy, even God was happy—or so He had it writ in people's faces. Only the person who claims God put her in Malacañang for a purpose was unhappy.

It was enough to make you believe in Providence or in that line from the movie "Field of Dreams": If you build it, they will come. You have a dream, build it.

They will come—in more ways than one. 7

The Supreme Court as legitimizing agent

WE ARE WONT TO SPEAK OF THE SUPREME Court as the last bulwark of our liberties and the ultimate defender of constitutionalism. That is the general truth. This is true because of the Court's power of judicial review which leads to the truism that the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, means what the Supreme Court says it means. Thus it is that, in the history of our nation, there have been instances when the Supreme Court has legitimized official action offensive to human rights and disruptive of constitutionalism. Hence, as we await the decision of the current Supreme Court on the constitutionality of the gag rule in Executive Order 464, and of Proclamation 1017 and the various official actions it occasioned, as well as the uses of BP 880, it might be salutary to review how our Supreme Court has sometimes, to our national regret, played around with sacred constitutional principles.

We might start with the decision that initially legitimized the 1973 Constitution. In the "Ratification Cases" a majority of the Supreme Court were of the view that the Constitution proposed by the 1971 Constitutional Convention was not ratified in accordance with the requirements of the 1935 Constitution. In the end, however the Court accepted the cryptic conclusion that the new Constitution was already in effect.

At that time, martial law was already in effect by virtue of Proclamation No. 1081. When the validity of the imposition of martial law was challenged, there was near unanimity about the Court's inability to declare it invalid under the circumstances of the time. But the Court also held that the imposition of martial law automatically suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus. Only Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma dissented. The 1987 Constitution would later reverse that decision saying that the imposition of martial law does not automatically suspend the privilege of the writ.

The next major decision upheld the wide-rang-

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.



ing legislative power of the President under martial law. The Court affirmed the "proposition that as Commander-in-Chief and enforcer or administrator of martial law, the incumbent President of the Philippines can promulgate proclamations, orders, and decrees during the period of Martial Law essential to the security and preservation of the Republic, to the defense of the political and social liberties of the people and to the institution of reforms to prevent the resurgence of rebellion or insurrection or secession or the threat thereof as well as to meet the impact of a worldwide recession, inflation or economic crisis which presently threatens all nations including highly developed countries." This was later affirmed by Amendment No. 6 of 1976, which established the President as legislative authority parallel to that of the legislature. But again the 1987 Constitution would categorically say that the imposition of martial law does not supplant the functioning of legislative assemblies.

Benigno Aquino Jr. also challenged the creation of military tribunals vested with jurisdiction "exclusive of civil courts" over crimes related to martial law. But the Court answered that martial law creates an exception to the general rule of exclusive jurisdiction to civil jurisdiction when such exception is necessary for the attainment of the objects of martial law. Again the 1987 Constitution had to reject this decision saying that martial law does not "authorize the conferment of jurisdiction on military courts and agencies over civilians where civil courts are able to function."

(Meanwhile, there are now media reports that the President is contemplating trial by military tribunal for suspected civilian smugglers.)

By September 1976, fully four years after the imposition of martial law and almost four years after the 1972 Constitution had taken effect, President Marcos had not yet convened the interim National Assembly mandated by the Constitution and he alone was the active legislative authority. It was in that same month and in that constitutional morass that Marcos, through presidential decrees, proposed a coordinated series of amendments the principal thrusts of which were (1) to consign the interim National Assembly to oblivion, (2) to create an interim Batasang Pambansa, and (3) to grant full and concurrent legislative power to the President. Thus the question was whether the President could propose amendments to the Constitution. The Supreme Court held he could. The main opinion also added that the "separation of executive and legislature ordained in the Constitution presents a distinct obstruction to efficient crisis government." Another Justice rubbed salt to the wounds of Philippine constitutionalism by arguing that the President had not proposed the amendments but had merely collated the amendments already proposed by the people in earlier referendum. Only Justices Claudio Teehankee and Muñoz-Palma dissented.

We are again at a crucial moment in our history when the Supreme Court is challenged to make decisions that can either weaken or strengthen constitutionalism in the Philippines. Meanwhile, the executive arm has been behaving as if martial law had been declared. Every official act so far done, unless contradicted by the Court, will continue to enjoy the presumption of legitimacy.

The Constitution says that the Supreme Court must decide cases submitted to it for decision within 24 months. We are, of course, hoping that the Court will not wait that long and that its decision will strengthen democratic processes.

Life

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate



march-rally led by Ilagan and her group during the Feb. 24 commemoration of Edsa I.

"It is not only baseless but, more importantly, it is ridiculous," said lawyer Angela Librado-Trinidad, chair of the city council's committee on women and children.

Here are the "ridiculous" allegations, that the police authorities claim constitute rebellion: "(M)ass action rally particularly at the freedom park ... said personalities were involved in the aggressive actions to destabilized (sic) the Philippine government ... (they) started to march from freedom park passing along the main streets and ... at centennial park ... they shouted their politically inclined beliefs to establish a transitional council to replaced (sic) the Arroyo Regime and to OUST PGMA and all other related issues to opposed (sic) the government interest ... strongly call for the immediate resignation of PGMA."

"The charge sheet is not only baseless but it is also unbelievable. It cannot even approach the definition of rebellion as defined in the Revised Penal Code," commented Caesar Europa, president of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines-Davao City Chapter. "At least the Marcos dictatorship (was) predictable" and had no pretenses about employing draconian measures, he added.

"This administration is more dangerous because it is *doble-cara*, pretending to be democratic but employing draconian measures to silence its critics," Ilagan said.

Of the "Davao 8," only Antonio Flores of KMP had faced similar charges in the past. Flores, a militant peasant leader, was charged in 2001 and imprisoned for more than a year for the crime of

rebellion and illegal possession of firearms. He was later acquitted on both charges.

"If fighting for the rights of the peasants and calling for the ouster of a fake president are an act of rebellion, then so be it. I will not be cowed by this latest trumped-up charge against us," Flores said.

Given the state of paranoia currently bedeviling the Arroyo administration, it would not be surprising if in the coming days more ridiculous charges are leveled against those perceived as "destabilizers and enemies of the state."

The administration could become more brazen in filing these charges as it continues to conduct a massive witch-hunt of its perceived enemies—in the political opposition, and even in the press. In Cagayan de Oro, for example, our chair in the Union of Peoples' Lawyers in Mindanao (UPLM), Fred Gapuz, reportedly has been included in the military's "order of battle" for his being a critic of the Arroyo administration. Last Friday's arrest of former Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman is another indication of this trend. So under the beleaguered Arroyo administration, walking along a major Metro Manila thoroughfare, while wearing a black T-shirt with a provocative slogan, is already a crime!

Indeed, even with its so-called lifting, Proclamation 1017 remains the real "residual threat" to our constitutionally guaranteed rights.

The continued crackdown on the political opposition and the critical press is a clear indicator that the Arroyo administration will employ all measures, legal or otherwise, to ensure its survival.

"These trumped-up charges against me and my colleagues are part of life," Ilagan said as she vowed that oppression and injustice "will not deter us, life goes on."

Incidentally, when her husband was arrested in 1985, "life" was taken to mean "Larry Ilagan Forever." This time around, "life" may as well mean "Luz Ilagan Forever" and "Laban is Forever."

Comments at kar_laws@yahoo.com or karlos_z23@hotmail.com

Fashion police

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



MR. POLICEMAN STOPPED SOME PEOPLE ON the sidewalk, as they exited a restaurant and prepared to cross the street to the Baywalk. Mr. Policeman had been watching the people for some time. He had with him many other policemen—at least one policeman, if not two, for every person in black in the group who had caught his fancy. Mr. Policeman said that crossing the street was out of the question. But why?

"We received an intelligence report," Mr. Policeman said.

Naturally someone asked, "What did it say?" Mr. Policeman ignored the question. Instead, he said to the people in black, "We know what you intend to do."

Naturally, they asked, "And what is that?" Mr. Policeman sidestepped the question and said, "We know you are up to no good. Look at your shirts."

Some of the shirts said, "*Pataksikin na. Now na.*" Too cutesy for comfort for many in the *somos* crowd, but this wasn't a gathering of the *somos*. One of those wearing a T-shirt that offended Mr. Policeman asked, "And it is illegal to wear what we want?"

Mr. Policeman ignored the question. He growled, "We want to preserve the peace and the tranquility of the people." Mr. Policeman had to say it rather loudly, because Hizzoner the Mayor was sponsoring a concert, and in preparation for it, music was blaring in what could only be described as an untroubling manner. But that was music, city-sponsored, too; and didn't require the mind-destabilizing effort of reading an 8" x 8" logo on a black T-shirt after sunset.

The people in black were rather taken aback by Mr. Policeman's insistence that his mind-reading activities had revealed not only what was on their minds—never mind what was inside their chests—but also what was going to happen in the future. Of course, everyone knew what the future had in store—which was 30 people or less crossing Roxas Boulevard on a pedestrian lane for a stroll along Baywalk and for a few minutes' thumbs-down gesture; then possibly helping the local economy by eating barbecue or fishballs—not to men-

tion catching "V for Vendetta" later that evening. Apparently, some of the police, safely behind Mr. Policeman's back, agreed with those in black. Quite a few nodded with every question asked by those in black.

But Mr. Policeman was not to let the future be. When the people in black decided they might as well cross the street individually, Mr. Policeman had them surrounded, then arrested two of them. Mr. Policeman bundled the two to his precinct, and eventually decided—after more phoning around—to hand over the two to more policemen at their castle-like headquarters, where the policemen spent a couple of hours figuring out how to make the law apply to those in black.

The law is harsh, but it is the law; we must have the rule of law! It goes like this:

"You're bad."

"Why?"

"Because!"

This is known as political will, even if it entails a lot of humdrum leafing through law books and calling up superiors. In the meantime, we waited.

As we waited, one person in black asked a rather high-ranking policeman (who seemed particularly keen on the goings-on), "Sir, what is your name?" The Very Important Policeman (VIP) gave the person a dirty look, as if the latter had said something dirty (like "human rights"). The VIP gave his name and asked, "Why do you want to know?" The person in black said, "Well, I just wanted to know, to see whether you're on our side." ("Our," meaning, of course, the citizenry, which has the right to ask policemen their names.) The VIP scowled. "I don't work for you. I work for the government." God Save the Queen.

Building a culture of quality education

"QUALITY EDUCATION IS ONLY FOR THE RICH STUDENTS. No one cares for the plight of poor students, especially in the Philippines. The government does not even care that the good and well-experienced teachers are leaving the country."

This message practically leapt out of my computer monitor the day after the commentary, titled "Quality education" (PDI, 3/13/06), of our board chair, Ms Eggie Apostol, appeared in the INQUIRER.

COMMENTARY

Butch Hernandez

It was e-mailed by an overseas Filipino worker in the Middle East. He made no effort to hide his deep disappointment with what he believed was the limp response by the national government and education stakeholders to the problems facing today's public schools. (One of my chores as executive director of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power (FWWPP) is to review every piece of communication on Education Revolution that comes to our e-mail.)

The World Bank report on Philippine education, titled "Improving the Quality of Basic Education," succinctly states that "inputs into the education system have been either of poor quality, insufficient in amount, or not in the right mix." The document also points out that "many processes (e.g., teacher recruitment, deployment, in-service training, and promotion) are unwieldy and ineffective, and support mechanisms are not in place to help teachers do their job or students from impoverished or disadvantaged backgrounds attend good schools. Now is a good time to respond to the education crisis. Many other developing countries have been investing heavily in their educational development, leaving the Philippines to face tougher competition in the global economy."

The FWPP's Education Revolution advocates sustained community involvement to help stem the crisis in our education system, especially in the aspect of quality education. This academic year, the FWPP is introducing the concept of a performance-based support system to sustain organized initiatives that will improve education delivery at levels as deep as the barangay.

The object is to arrive at a "performance agreement" of sorts between the public school and the community it serves. The terms of the "agreement" are enumerated in a Strategic Plan jointly prepared by the school and the community. The achievement rates of its students as measured in standard diagnostic tests are the "currency of exchange" that the public school uses to unlock resources in the community.

Since we launched Education Revolution, specifically at the community level, we have been deluged with letters and calls from individuals and entities sharing in our belief that quality education is the best weapon against poverty. The statements of solidarity are very much appreciated and deeply encouraging. The problem is how to turn all this positive energy into a continuing community initiative. If you really want to help improve the quality of education in the public school in your own community, how and where do you start?

At the beginning, of course. By learning as much as you can about the state your chosen public school is in right now. You don't need to be an investigative reporter to do this. The basic information about the public school you are thinking of helping is quite accessible—as public documents—from a variety of sources. The Department of Education website at www.deped.gov.ph is a good place to start. More detailed information can be obtained from the Basic Education Information System (BEIS), a facility developed by Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz. Please note though that the data go only up to academic year 2004. But they are still statistically valid.

From our own experience, we can confidently say that there is no scarcity of data. In fact, the reverse is true: there is so much information about the education sector that many community initiatives get sidetracked at this stage due to information overload. You'll come across such arcane terms like "cohort survival rate" and "inflation-adjusted budget allocation" and sinister-sounding acronyms like MOOE and SEF. Most likely, you will be shocked by what you will discover: unbelievably substandard facilities, overcrowded classrooms to the point of bursting, poorly motivated teachers, and the list goes on.

After your initial information gathering, the next thing to do is to get more people in the community talk about quality education: what it means and why it is important to the community, and not just to the teachers and the principal of the public school. In community development parlance, this is called "emphasizing stakeholdership."

The focus of these preliminary community talks goes beyond just raising funds to build better school facilities. Yes, these things are also important, but finding creative ways to help our children "learn for life" should be our primary goal. For example, being able to really read—and not just mouth the words—is a basic "life skill." The DepEd says, by Grade III, the pupil should already be an independent reader.

In the course of your inquiry into the state of public education in your community, you are bound to uncover a myriad of reasons why Jaime or Anita—already in Grade VI—seems to find difficulty reading newspapers like the INQUIRER. The idea is to first make other people in the community aware of the problem. Putting together an organized education initiative that is premised on performance can come a bit later, when conditions are ripe. Remember that our goal is to build a culture of quality education.

The World Bank report mentioned earlier also says, "This is the important thread that needs to be woven [into all other efforts to improve basic education]. Many Filipinos are confused about what is meant by quality education. Many equate it with education credentials despite evidence that credentials do not necessarily correspond to learning competencies. Many also think that resources in schools (e.g., more computers, nicer buildings, more teachers) [are] a guarantee of good education despite evidence that well-endowed schools do not always deliver good instruction, while many poorer schools do."

Building a culture of quality [therefore] is to emphasize competency rather than credentials or inputs. It means defining performance targets and assessing performance against those targets, and regularly examining why those targets are not reached and what needs to be done."

The FWPP will be glad to walk you through the crucial information-gathering stage, and answer any questions you might have. The DepEd's BEIS is available on CD. Just send us an e-mail should you want a copy, that is, if you haven't acquired one yet from the DepEd.

Most of all, we'd like to hear of any ideas you might have, to make the Education Revolution a national movement for quality education.

(You may send e-mail to the author at execdir@fwpp.org.)

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Substandard RP passports

THIS IS TO CALL THE ATTENTION of the passport division of the Department of Foreign Affairs to the substandard materials being used in Philippine passports.

The plastic lamination over my passport photo was torn when an immigration officer abroad opened my passport. My experience was not an isolated case. I learned from several colleagues that they, too, had the same experience.

I urge the DFA to look into the matter and come up with measures to ensure that Philippine passports can withstand reasonable wear and tear. I had to have my passport replaced because the embassies where I had to apply for a visa would not accept passports with torn laminations.

—LOURDES BERNARDO,
1221 Cobocob St., Malate, Manila

LETTERS

Go Gloria, good luck, Philippines

THE STATE HAS THE RIGHT TO DEFEND ITSELF from chaos and anarchy and lawlessness. I support Presidential Proclamation 1017. It is time that we contained the destabilizers and the self-proclaimed "defenders" of our democracy. They have been making a lot of noise about just anything to pin down President Macapagal-Arroyo. They have scooped up all the dirt in the world to throw at her face.

My question is: what have these destabilizers contributed to improve the lives of our people? Some of them are former senators, civic leaders and government officials. The "fears"

of people who are supposed to be "concerned" about democratic values are unfounded, unwarranted and exaggerated. They are just making an issue out of nothing.

Since the issuance of Proclamation 1017, has there been a citizen arrested innocently? The people who have been arrested are those who prominently played a role in the coup. Their destabilization efforts did not prosper because people sensed their bad motives and evil ends. People know love of country when they see one. If the GMA-bashers really love the Philippines, they should be working for prosperity and peace.

Those of us working abroad are monitoring closely the situation there. We can only have a sigh of relief with Proclamation 1017. I am not a fan of the President, but I say, "Go, Gloria, go!" Hunt down the evil people and the cowards and the selfish and the greedy.

It is time that the government flexed its muscles. GMA should not accept a mere push-up as punishment for the military men involved in the coup. She should court-martial them, and charge the civilians in court. Good luck Philippines!

—JUDE SANSON,
tamides@yahoo.com

'Righteousness makes a nation great'

THE EDSA I REVOLUTION IS SUPPOSED TO be one of the most glorious moments in the history of the Philippines and of the world. It gave birth to People Power and paved the way for the downfall of an oppressive regime. But the 20th anniversary celebration of People Power did not push through because the President proclaimed a state of national emergency, by force of which people were prohibited from gathering at the EDSA Shrine.

Those who defied the proclamation were forcibly dispersed by the police with water cannons and truncheons. Others were arrested and detained. What irony. The primary beneficiary of People Power II has now become the nemesis of People Power.

"Righteousness makes a nation great; sin is a disgrace to any nation." (Proverbs 14:34) Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada did not heed this wise counsel and they were deposed by People Power. President Macapagal-Arroyo must learn from history and should avoid repeating it.

A nation like the Philippines can be great if righteousness and justice reign. But if the sins of injustice, graft and corruption, influence-peddling and the like, continue unabated, then we will remain a nation of "hewers of wood and drawers of water." We will continue to be a nation mired in poverty and corruption. Moses warns those who keep on sinning: "You can be sure that your sin will track you down." (Numbers 32:23)

Let us, leaders and people, heed the Proverbs. Let GMA lead us to righteousness and justice if she wants to remain in power. "Let justice flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry." (Amos 5:24)

Shall we continue in sin and remain in disgrace? No! We admonish the President to lead us to repentance. May God have mercy on us!

—SOLITO K. TOQUERO,
bishop, The United Methodist Church,
Manila Episcopal Area

Genuine change, not just Charter change

THE HELLO GARCI SCANDAL THAT OUTRAGED Filipinos middle of last year refuses to die. It continues to smolder. Clearly at issue is the legitimacy of the current President amid allegations of massive fraud and cheating exposed by the Hello Garci tapes. It is also clear the people have not been appeased by the action of Congress to vote down the impeachment process.

Comes now the proposal to resolve the problem by shifting to a parliamentary form of government through Charter change. The President was only too willing to create a Constitutional Commission which acted with amazing speed in submitting proposed changes to the 1987 Constitution.

We view the whole process of the Charter change with alarm. The timing of the proposal to amend the Constitution and shift to a parliamentary form of government is suspect. Some of the provisions that are being eyed for amendment are those that seek to protect our right to self-determination, our country's integrity and our people's dignity against the rapacious greed for commerce.

Charter change is being proposed at a time when the executive branch of government is being indicted by the people for graft and corruption, election fraud, subservience to foreign dictates and insensitivity to the larger is-

sue of genuine change. Charter change is being rammed down our throats at a time of deep social, economic and political crisis. Charter change is inspired more by President Macapagal-Arroyo's desperate need for political survival rather than by the primordial interest of the citizens of this republic.

Amending the Constitution and changing the form of government are not the solution to the ills now plaguing this country. Ferreting out the truth and letting the wheels of justice take their course are the means by which change can come about. Addressing the roots of the problems of poverty, corruption, war and governance is the only way we can get on the road to genuine change.

We oppose the move to amend the 1987 Constitution.

We call on our church leaders to start a massive education campaign and to expose the dire consequences of such a move.

We are launching the Church Forum Against Charter Change which, in cooperation with other objectors, will plan and coordinate the courses of action of church people opposed to Charter change.

—SIGNED BY 13 MEMBERS
OF CHURCHPEOPLE'S FORUM AGAINST
CHARTER CHANGE
c/o ecumenicalbishops@yahoo.com

No moral ascendancy to lecture on 1017

IN THE FAILED MILITARY COUP ATTEMPTS, we are merely reaping the wages of "back-to-the-barracks" and "20-push-ups" military justice.

Not surprisingly, the ones protesting the government's decisive move (Proclamation 1017) to preserve the State were the most responsible for allowing the preservation of the politicized military we have to deal with today.

If then Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos had meted out genuine military justice to the 1989 putschists—among them, Gringo Honasan, Danilo Lim and Ariel Quera-

bin—we would not have to face military adventurism every once so often. For those who bear arms for the State, the obligation to respect the Constitution and constitutional authority is unconditional. If they want to be political players, they should divest themselves of their arms.

Neither Ramos nor Cory Aquino, who let the genie out of the bottle in 1986 and failed to put it back in 1989, has the moral ascendancy to lecture us on Proclamation 1017.

—CENON MAKALINAO,
cmakalino@yahoo.com

PNP first before the media

BEFORE GEN. ARTURO LOMIBAO imposes guidelines on the media, he should first issue guidelines to his own men, over whom he seems to have no control.

This letter concerns especially the policemen manning traffic in Metro Manila. All through Edsa, you see buses loading and unloading passengers in the middle of the highway, putting them at risk, because the drivers are too lazy to go to the loading/unloading areas.

Along Commonwealth Avenue and Quezon Avenue in Quezon City, jeepneys and buses pile up at loading/unloading zones, taking up most of the lanes so that traffic gets congested. In-between, they also load and unload in the center of the road. Not only that, they weave over to the innermost lane to get past other vehicles, then suddenly swerve to the right to unload passengers in the middle lanes. Accidents are only avoided due to the alertness of the other drivers whose path they cut.

All throughout España, it is the same thing. Sometimes, the traffic congestion stretches all the way from Quiapo to UST and even beyond, on the southbound lanes, because the jeepneys, FX taxis and buses are loading or unloading passengers—especially in no loading/unloading areas, like the exit in the Lerma-to-Quiaop underpass.

There is a loading/unloading area, but this is ignored with impunity by jeepney drivers—as long as they fork over P5 to the candy and sampaguita vendors who are said to be "collectors" of

the traffic enforcers.

The authorities put up a divider on the stretch leading to Quezon Bridge, but it seems not to do the job of ensuring smooth traffic flow (if that was the intention, in the first place, or was it for "other reasons"?), as jeepneys going to Quiapo-Illalim use the lane inside the divider to load and unload passengers—again, this is a no-loading/unloading zone.

The same situation exists along Taft Avenue and all other streets going south, north, west or east where jeepneys abound. The jeepney driver takes his "king of the road" status very seriously, while traffic enforcers look the other way.

The only solution to our traffic problems in Metro Manila is for the traffic enforcers to really enforce traffic. Lomibao should look into this instead of cluttering his mind with the pros and cons of politics in the media.

Let the media do their work unhindered and without intimidation. Make the policemen on the beat do their work. It doesn't take a miracle to control Lomibao's subordinates, only a bit of hands-on management.

He should also look into the "reasons" why the police can be bullies toward peaceful ralliers but remain helpless in the face of traffic snarls caused by their own negligence.

—MITOS S. GARCIA,
c/o National Press Club,
Magallanes Drive,
Intramuros, Manila

A 'moot and academic' question?

I REFER TO THE INQUIRER NEWS report "Gov't argues petition vs 1017 moot." (PDI, 3/7/06)

If the cars of the lawyers who are defending Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Proclamation 1017 were stolen, but later returned to them

by the car thief, could the latter plead that he has no case to answer because the crime has become "moot and academic"?

—JAIN ROGERS,
Flat 4/B, 1-3 Shin Hing St.,
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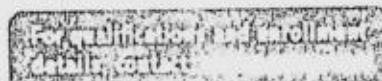


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2 rebels, soldier slain in Cebu clash

By Jhunnex Napallacan and Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—TWO NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY (NPA) rebels, including a top leader, and one soldier were killed in an encounter yesterday in a village in Tabuelan town, 86.9 km north of the city.

Military and police officials identified one of the rebels as Jimmy Badayos, alleged secretary of the NPA Front Committee 2 operating in one city and eight towns in the mid-north Cebu area. His aliases included Warren, Jin, Vassily and Cyrus.

"Being a secretary of Front 2, Badayos was actually the top leader and right-hand of Central Visayas Regional Party Commit-

tee of the CPP-NPA head Kuman-der Roy Erecre," said Lt. Col. Jefferson Omandam, Armed Forces Central Command (Centcom) spokesperson.

He said the death of Badayos was a big setback to the NPA unit operating in Danao City and the towns of Balamban, Asturias, Tuburan, Tabuelan, Catmon, Carmen, part of Com-

postela and Sogod.

The other rebel fatality was identified as Guillermo Alburo, alias Jed.

Omandam refused to identify the lone government fatality pending notification of his family. But he said the soldier had the rank of private first class and suffered two bullet wounds in the chest.

About 50 Tabuelan policemen and soldiers of the 78th Infantry Battalion went to Sitio Kalumbrian, Barangay Dalid in Tabuelan to check reports of the presence of armed men in the area.

Omandam said the team was fired upon by about 20 rebels at 7:21 a.m. An exchange of gunfire ensued, which lasted more than an hour, ensued.

He said the rebels left behind their two fallen comrades, an M-16 rifle, a Motorola radio with charger, tape recorder with two cassette tapes, cellular phone, hand grenade, personal belongings and antigovernment documents.

Omandam said the firearm was owned by Pfc. Donald Ramirez who was killed in an encounter last year in Barangay Somon, Tuburan.

Police provincial director Senior Supt. Vicente Loot said the bodies of Badayos and Alburo were brought to the town's sports complex and later to a funeral home in this city for autopsy.

In Escalante City, Negros Occidental, at least 40 NPA rebels fled with nine high-powered firearms

yesterday morning after raiding the detachment of the PNP's 1st Regional Mobile Group.

NPA attack

Provincial police director Senior Supt. Charles Calima said the rebels took two M-14 rifles, two M-16 rifles, three Garand rifles, a .45 cal. pistol and an M-60 machine gun from the detachment at Sitio Cubay, Barangay Malasibog in Escalante, 102.1 km north of Bacolod City.

No one was hurt among the two policemen and eight Civilian Volunteers Organization members who were on duty at that time, said Calima.

He said the 10 were caught off-guard while having breakfast

when 30-40 guerrillas barged in to the detachment at 6 a.m.

The police personnel had returned to the detachment at about 3 p.m. after securing a nearby fiesta dance.

An Army intelligence officer, who asked not to be named, told the INQUIRER that some of those on duty were sleeping in their quarters when the raiders came.

Calima said the detachment personnel led by PO3 Antonio Bravo and 1st RMG Chief Flomar Natuel, had been relieved from their post following the incident.

Chief Supt. Doroteo Reyes, police director for Western Visayas, arrived in Negros Occidental to supervise pursuit operations against the raiders.

Dynamite blasting scaring whales in Babuyan

By Blanche S. Rivera

FISHERMEN IN THE ONCE TRANQUIL Babuyan Islands in Cagayan province are literally having a blast.

Local fishermen, citing poor catch in recent months, have resorted to dynamite blasting to salvage metal from shipwrecks surrounding the islands, according to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)-Philippines.

It is said to be the newest and most environmentally damaging source of livelihood in the islands, said the WWF, which conducts an annual on-site monitoring of the Babuyan Islands for its Humpback Whale Research and Development Project.

The blasting are scaring away the Pacific humpback whales that come to the Philippines to breed this time of the year, it said.

The dynamite blasts were also inevitably destroying the coral reefs in the Camiguin Island, where the blasts have been monitored.

The WWF records an average of 100 sightings in the Babuyan Islands annually but fears that this would be reduced due to the dynamite blasts.

"We will continue to monitor the whales to see if the blasting has a direct impact on the whales ... although definitely there must be permanent damage to the coral reefs in the area," WWF consultant Jomarie Acebes said in a phone interview.

Located about 50 km north of the Luzon mainland, the Babuyan Islands has the highest known cetacean species diversity in the Philippines, hosting 14 of the 25 known cetacean species in the world including the humpback whale, sperm whale and bottle-nosed dolphin.

The WWF team that arrived in Camiguin Island north of Cagayan province on Feb. 17 has recorded up to six blasts per hour almost daily. On March 18, just days after the Calayan police arrived in Camiguin, four blasts were recorded again.

"The blasts are really loud. You can hear it even up to eight kilometers from the shore. That's very loud considering that the dynamites explode under water," Acebes said.

The locals themselves have admitted that those who go out for blasting use about a gallon of dynamite for every trip, she said. They dive to plant the dynamites in the shipwrecks and then recover the steel that comes loose due to the explosion.

The scrap metals are sold in the island for about P4 per kilo. The dealer from the island then sells the scrap in Aparri or Cagayan for about P10 per kilo, Acebes said.

There are at least five known shipwrecks surrounding Camiguin Island, all of which are in the breeding ground of humpback whales that travel to the Babuyan Islands before proceeding to Alaska and Russia to feed.

The shipwrecks, which are more than 20 years old, have become artificial reefs that serve as refuge and breeding ground for fish.

Acebes said the locals have been salvaging metal from the shipwrecks for about two years now, but they used to dive and use acetylene to recover the loose scraps.

The locals have only started to use dynamites the past months because they wanted to get bigger pieces of metal, she said.

The Cagayan provincial government passed an ordinance in 2003 declaring the humpback whales as protected species within the territorial jurisdiction of the province.

The WWF has written Calayan Mayor Joseph Llopis to inform him of the blasting. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources have also been informed of the illegal activity.

The Calayan police have also visited Camiguin and apprehended the locals for the blasting but the WWF revealed that no police report has been filed in Calayan about the blasts.

Pressures such as illegal hunting and overfishing have threatened the global population of cetaceans. Humpbacks are listed as endangered under the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the US Endangered Species Act.



A PAGE from the book "Moonbeams" illustrated with rubber cuts by Leonardo Aguinaldo, 2004 Grand Prize winner of the Asean Art Award.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Environmentalism as told to kids

By Vincent Cobreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—AN ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY group thinks preaching the values of tree fairies to schoolchildren will get Mother Earth more mileage than protest marches.

The Cordillera Green Network Inc., a

Baguio-based reforestation crusader, launched on March 12 a children's book called "Moonbeams," one of 129 stories submitted to CGN's first ecological writing competition in 2005. CGN plans to publish most of these children's stories as part of a new advocacy strategy.

"We want to teach environmentalism, but we realize that if we are fighting for our children, we must show the children what the fight is all about. So we are producing children's books to promote the management of the environment instead," said filmmaker Jo Banasan, CGN executive director.

Banasan said CGN did not expect to find a wealth of stories from contest entries.

A story called "Tailings' Dam," by Maureen Loste, explores a child's experience with a mine, and these are some of the stories now being lined up for publishing, Banasan said.

Loste and her husband, Manuel, Bayan Muna national vice chair, have been opposing corporate mining.

"CGN is all about promoting the soul [of ecology], and we want to offer information that is accessible to everyone, especially children of the Cordillera, where [old school] mining and logging have contributed to the destruction of the region's virgin forests," she said.

CGN principally espouses reforestation.

Ties with the Japan Fund for Global Environment and the Kiyosato Educational and Experiment Project allowed CGN to create a 20-hectare tree nurturing facility in Benguet, and another 20-hectare tree farm in Apayao.

All these efforts will go to rot once communities stop sustaining these forests, "which is why it is important for children to understand the legacy we are leaving them," Banasan said.

"Children understand stories because stories are always magical. In Kalinga where I grew up, I always looked forward to visiting the fields where a storyteller stays. I enjoyed those stories, so I am certain children of today will enjoy CGN's stories," she said.

"Moonbeams," written by Baguio-based freelance writer Nonette Bennett, took the CGN contest's top prize, and was selected as its first book because it was a story "with no borders," Banasan said.

Illustrated by Leonardo Aguinaldo, 2004 Asean Art Award grand prize winner, "Moonbeams," tells the story of siblings Ambic and Ambit who live on a mountain.

The children frequent a waterfall to visit tree fairies, formed from moonbeams cast at the highland's calm surface every night.

But the adults of their community no longer believe in fairies, and they ignore the children's plea when they allow farmer Pedped to clear a section of the mountain forest for his vegetable garden.

The fairies disappear, and in their absence, the gardens dry up and the mountain loses its resources.

Banasan said like many other stories submitted to CGN, "Moonbeams" presents children both the ideal and the practical points of view.

Bennett's story allows children to understand why the farmer needed to clear the forests, while exploring the consequences of his actions.

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3-YEAR UP STUDY

Visayas kids face risks of lead poisoning

By Hazel P. Villa
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—CHILDREN AGED 5 YEARS OLD and below in the Visayas may be facing risks of lead poisoning, a three-year health study indicated.

The study, conducted by Dr. Orville Solon of the University of the Philippines' School of Economics in Diliman, Quezon City, found 1,294 children from 11 Visayan provinces with lead levels in their bloodstream way beyond the hazard limit.

The children had lead in the blood of up to 20 micrograms per deciliter, about twice the 10 µg/dL allowable limit, the study showed.

The number represented 30 percent of 4,312 children whose blood was tested for the study. The children were from Capiz, Iloilo, Negros Occidental, Bohol, Cebu, Negros Oriental, Siquijor, Camiguin, Biliran, Leyte and Eastern Samar.

Solon, a health economist, presented his study, titled "Results from the Quality Improvement Demonstration Study (QIDS): An Unanticipated Finding of Lead Exposure in Children 5 and Younger" on the second day of the 2nd National Conference on Population, Health and Environment held March 15-17 at the Waterfront Hotel here.

The conference was convened by the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and the Development Foundation, Inc.

Study results showed that more than 10 percent of children tested in Bohol, Negros Oriental, Biliran and Leyte had lead levels in the blood greater than 20 µg/dL.

A smaller percentage of those from other provinces had 10-20 µg/dL.

Solon found that seven of the 16 identified potential exposure sources for lead had a range of lead concentration near or beyond the hazard limits as determined by applicable US regulatory agencies.

The children found with lead in the blood were greatly exposed to paint chips, dust wipes, canned tuna, candy wrappers, gasoline, motor oil and fishing weights.

The mean lead found in the blood of the 4,312 tested children was 9.40 µg/dL, near the cut-off of 10 µg/dL as stipulated by the Center for Disease Control.

Elizabeth Butrick, project manager of the QIDS, said any amount of lead in the blood is dangerous.

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The range of concentration of lead from exposure to gasoline as found in the bodies of the children was 4.6 to 24.6 parts per million (ppm). The hazard limit is 13 ppm.

Candy wrappers and gasoline are not supposed to have any lead in them, but Solon's study found that children exposed to such had lead in their blood.

About 530 to 120,000 ppm of lead from paint chips were also found in the children's blood. The hazard limit is 5,000 ppm.

Lead from motor oil and fishing weights were also found. These had no registered hazard limits because these were not regulated.

Solon said lead poisoning was a serious problem because the potential consequences of high lead levels in children would be acute neural toxicity, cognitive and behavioral impairment and developmental delays, with anemic children more at risk because they absorb more lead.

The study said the IQ (intelligence quotient) levels of children with "elevated lead levels" in their blood averaged 90.

"This IQ ... is problematic," said Solon, who said QIDS spent \$10 per blood test (or about P500 at the time the study was conducted in 2002-05).

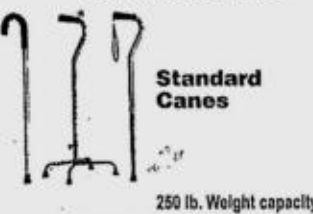
Solon said the Department of Energy and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources were already informed of their findings last year.

"Their response was that they called on their regional units to talk to the parents of the children but they (the two departments) have not developed very specific actions to face the lead problem," said Solon in an interview after his presentation.

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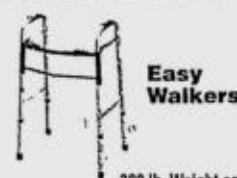
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ROUNDUP

Exec charged with estafa

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—An officer of a pre-need firm here is facing an estafa case for allegedly defrauding a fishing tycoon. The case was filed Feb. 24 upon the recommendation of lawyer Boye Marna, head of the National Bureau of Investigation in South Cotabato-Sarangani-General Santos. The suspect, Aldrin Robleza, a senior division manager of Grayline Plans Inc., was arrested by NBI agents in an entrapment operation, but was freed after posting a P40,000 bail. In her complaint, Aurea Damalerio of Damalerio Fishing Corp. said she paid more than P11,000 million to Robleza from 2004 to 2006 after the suspect pledged to help facilitate the approval of her \$20-million loan with the Singapore-based Asia Pacific Venture Capital Ltd.

Aquiles Z. Zonia, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Cha-cha debate



ROXAS CITY—The provincial government hold a "grand debate" on Charter change before the end of March. Gov. Vicente Bermejo on Tuesday said a group headed by provincial legal officer Napoleon Oducazo was formed to design and facilitate the holding of the debate to be covered live by all radio and television stations here. The proposition, according to provincial administrator Dante Bermejo, is "resolve to adopt the proposed Charter change drafted by the Constitutional Commission." The debate, to be conducted in Hiligaynon, is meant to inform Capiceños of the proposed Charter amendments.

Felipe V. Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau

Prostitution ring bared

DUMAGUETE CITY—Mayor Agustin Perdices on Tuesday revealed the existence of an underground prostitution and possibly pedophile ring in Negros Oriental. During the first meeting of the Anti-Indecency Board at City Hall, Perdices pointed to some tricycle drivers who hang out late at night in front of Why Not Restaurant beside the Perdices-owned Marnia's restaurant. Perdices said that while no actual crime had been committed along the boulevard, the place was where the suspected pimps meet with their clients. If a price has been agreed, the customers are brought outside of the city to meet the women or child prostitutes.



Alex Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau

3 cops acquitted

LEGAZPI CITY—Three city policemen, who had been charged with the murder of a hostage-taker at Pacific Mall here 19 months ago, were acquitted by Regional Trial Court Branch 5 Judge Pedro Soriano. SPO2 Darwin Aragon, PO1 Eddie Casill and PO1 Felino Hate were cleared after the judge noted that they had dutifully responded to a request for assistance by the mall management when the hostage-taking occurred and that they had acted in self-defense. The murder complaint was filed by Gloria Bobis, mother of hostage-taker Roderick Bobis of Barangay Bigaa, who met with his estranged wife Raquel at the mall on Aug. 11, 2003 for a possible reconciliation. The meeting turned sour when Roderick, a security guard, poked a gun at Raquel.

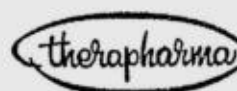
Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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Wave of protests marks third anniversary of Iraq invasion

From page A1

pers' demand for the early withdrawal of its small peacekeeping contingent—a decision strongly criticized by Washington and other allies, but applauded at home.

A second Filipino worker abducted by Iraqi militants was freed in June last year after almost eight months in captivity.

The Iraq Solidarity Campaign also opposed the presence of US troops in the southern region of Mindanao, where they have been providing training and noncombat assistance to Filipino troops. The group criticized President Macapagal-Arroyo for allowing the Americans to intervene in domestic problems.

The primary target of US military assistance in the south is the Abu Sayyaf, a small but brutal al-Qaida-linked group on Washington's list of terrorist groups. The Abu Sayyaf has been blamed for deadly bomb attacks, acts of banditry and kidnappings for ransom, including of Americans.

2nd day of demos

In Tokyo, about 800 demonstrators took to the streets for the second day, after some 2,000 protested Saturday.

"The Iraq war was President Bush's big mistake and the whole world is against him," said Ayako Nishimura, 66, who is a city council member from the Tokyo suburb of Sagami-hara and organized Sunday's protest. "Iraq must decide its own affairs."

In Malaysia's largest city, Kuala Lumpur, about 600 people protested peacefully on Sunday—unlike a gathering last year in which police used a water cannon to disperse demonstrators.

About 150 policemen stood by as protesters from rights groups and opposition parties chanted, "Stop the War," "No Blood for Oil" and "America Get Out of Iraq."

In the Asia-Pacific region, a variety of factors appeared to distract people from issue. In the southern Australian city of Melbourne, which saw some of Australia's biggest antiwar protests three years ago, attention has been diverted by the Commonwealth Games, while in Thailand thousands of people have been embroiled in protests against embattled Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

In South Korea, it was a baseball match. At least 1,000 activists rallied in Seoul on Sunday to condemn the US-led invasion of Iraq and to urge the government to bring their troops home.

"Withdraw the Zaytun unit," the activists shouted, referring to the code name of the South Korean troops stationed in northern Iraq. South Korea has the third-largest contingent of foreign troops in Iraq after the United States and Britain.

The antiwar demonstration was a stark contrast to a crowd of some 10,000 baseball fans who turned out in a street rally a few blocks away to cheer and watch their national team on an outdoor screen as it played arch-rival Japan in a semifinal match of the inaugural World Baseball Classic in San Diego.

Rumsfeld defense

US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld answered critics of the war in a guest column in Sunday's Washington Post newspaper, asserting that if Americans were to turn away from Iraq now, it would be "the modern equivalent of handing postwar Germany back to the Nazis."

Protesters in Chicago marched down Michigan Avenue to a Saturday night rally at Daley Plaza downtown. Police estimated that more than 7,000 people took part.

"I'm against this war. I'm against the torture," said protester Martha Conrad, 54, of Chicago. "We're doing this for the people of Iraq."

In Pakistan, hundreds of people held antiwar rallies in several cities on Saturday, chanting slogans such as "Down with America!"

In London, police said a march from Parliament to a rally in Trafalgar Square on Saturday drew about 15,000 people, far fewer than the 100,000 that organizers had expected.

The numbers joining war protests across Europe were dwarfed by the half million people who demonstrated in France against proposed labor law reforms, and about 80,000 nationalists who rallied in Belgrade to mourn accused war criminal and former Balkan strongman Slobodan Milosevic, who died a week ago in his cell at a UN war crimes court in the Netherlands.

Speakers in London demanded coalition forces be withdrawn from Iraq, warning that the fighting could spread to neighboring Iran because of the international standoff over Tehran's nuclear program.



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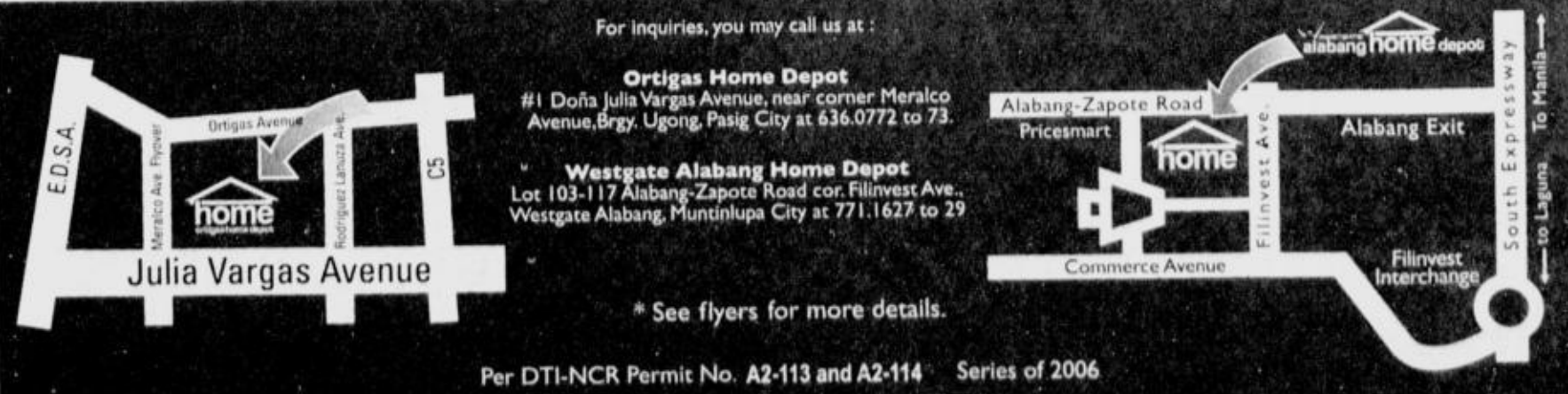
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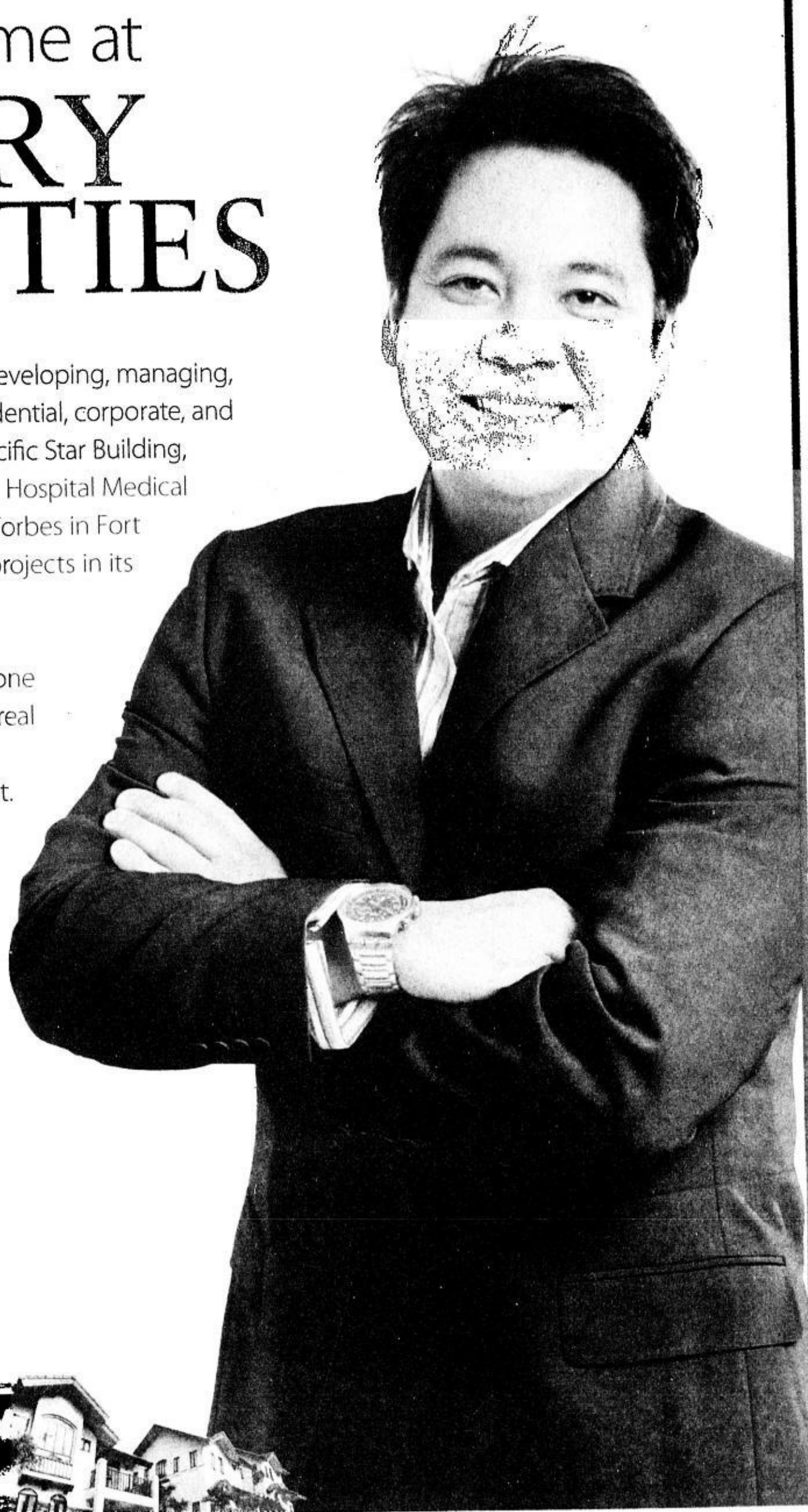
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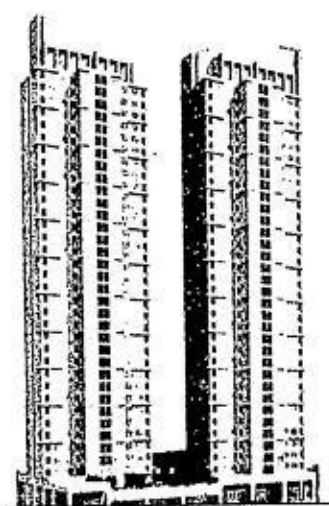
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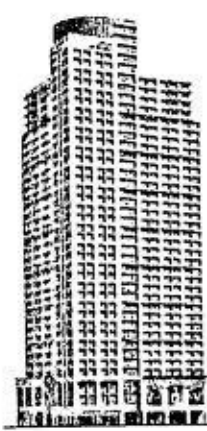
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Man wounded in Umale shooting dies in hospital

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE ELECTRICIAN WHO WAS ALSO SHOT on Thursday when he rushed to help businessman Leonardo Umale passed away after fighting for his life for three days.

Ernesto Ganton died on Saturday night at The Medical City in Pasig City because of a gunshot wound in his belly. He had undergone surgery for his injury a day before.

Ganton was with Umale when four men armed with .45 caliber handguns shot the businessman four times in the head while they

were about to enter the Pearl Plaza Building on Pearl Drive.

Ganton had rushed to Umale's side and was shot in the process.

"The Umale family feels sad. He was a very loyal employee who had worked for Mr. Umale for a very long time," the Umales' lawyer, Hans Santos, told the INQUIRER.

Ganton worked as an electrician in the Pearl Plaza Building which was owned by the businessman.

Santos said the Umale family had already expressed willingness to let Ganton's family

stay with them.

Umale's ashes, placed inside an urn, were sealed inside a crypt yesterday afternoon at the Christ the King Church in Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

Asked if investigators had already uncovered any significant development in the case, Eastern Police District director Chief Supt. Charlemagne Alejandrino said: "Wala pa (None yet)."

The Umale family has offered a P10-million reward to anyone who could provide information on the four gunmen and the mastermind behind the killing.

WHAT'S INSIDE



■ P75,000 worth of shabu seized in Pasay

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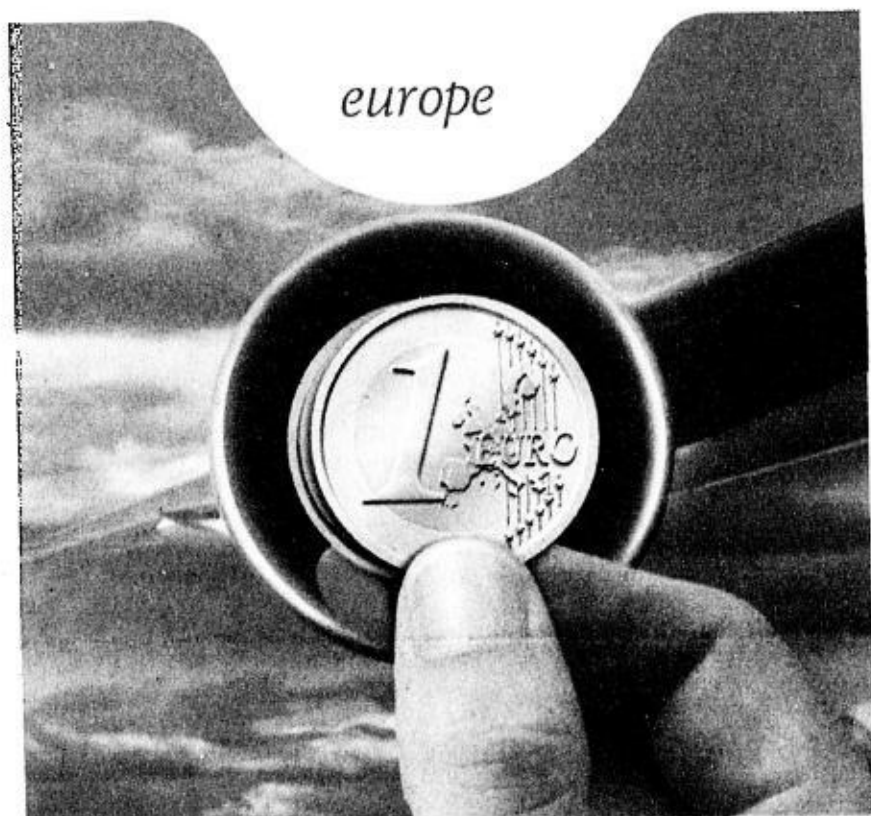
■ MMDA: More pedestrians killed last year

/A26

■ Business groups laud 168 mall raid

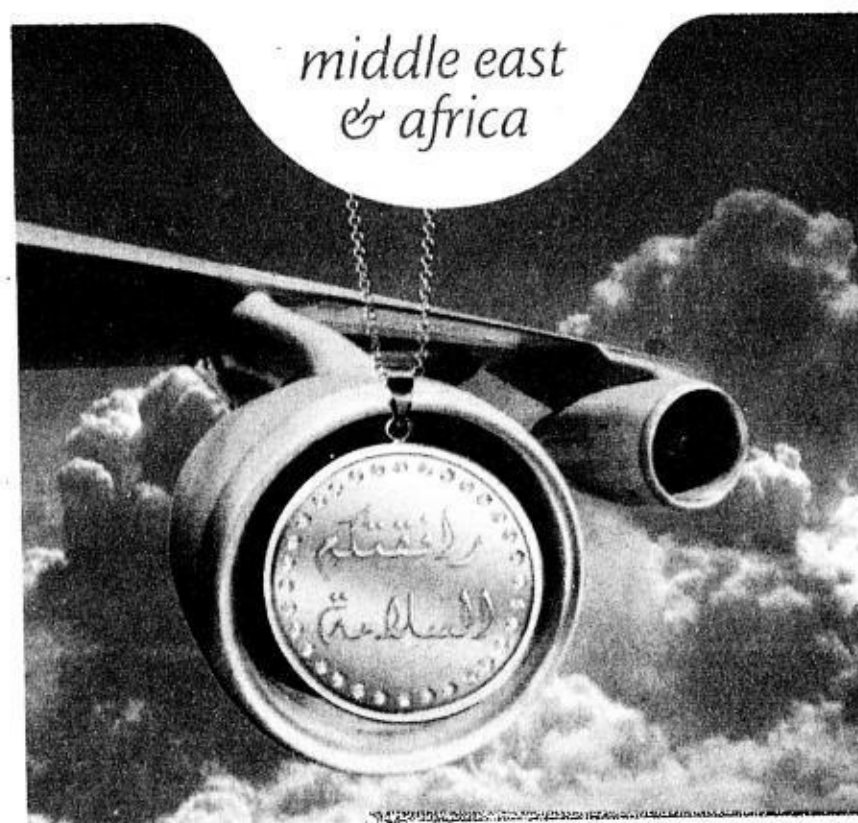
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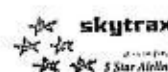
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More pedestrians killed last year

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR, MOST of the people killed in road accidents in the metropolis were pedestrians, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said yesterday.

An accident analysis report of the agency's Road Safety Unit (RSU) showed that of the 355 fatalities in 2005, 180 were pedestrians who were killed while crossing the road, 116 others were drivers while 59 were passengers.

Most of the fatal accidents also happened at night, between 4 p.m. and 6 a.m.

In 2004, 142 or more than half of the 281 persons who died in road accidents were pedestrians. The same trend was observed from June 2002 to November 2003 with 233 out of 359 fatalities also pedestrians.

"The relatively high proportion of pedestrians killed... is still a cause for concern," the RSU said in its report this year.

"There are still lots of commuters who cross the roads indiscriminately, even if they could see signs warning them against doing so... There are even people who would cut through the steel fences we had put up on the sidewalks and center islands just to cross

where it's risky. It's really surprising what they do," MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno said.

The MMDA said that this was why they had put up pink signs on the road with the warning: "Huwag tumawid, nakamamatay" (Crossing the road could kill you).

"Maybe some people think the government just suddenly thought of putting up those signs without much thinking, so they think they don't mean anything, that they are not worth following. But we put up those signs after a thorough study and for their own safety," Nacianceno said.

He added that aside from crossing the road, the speedy flow of traffic along roads that had been widened may also be another factor leading to fatalities among pedestrians. Other causes: Crowded sidewalks which force pedestrians to walk on the road and undisciplined drivers who do not slow down as they approach pedestrian lanes.

Although last year's fatalities amounted to a 26 percent rise in accident-related deaths, the RSU said that the increase was mainly due to its boosted data gathering capacity, as its wider-reaching system of collating accident reports in the metropolis was initiated just last year.



DIVE INTO SUMMER

As the temperature soars with the onset of summer, residents in Navotas cool down by swimming in Manila Bay, just a few meters away from the town's newly-opened centennial park.

RANDY HORMILLOSA

QC reaches out to landslide victims

By DJ Yap

TO REPLACE A SYMBOL OF GRIEF with one of healing, the people of Quezon City have presented Barangay Guinsaung in St. Bernard town of Southern Leyte with a most welcome gift: A new school building.

The old Guinsaung Elementary School was buried in the Feb. 17 landslide that nearly erased the barangay from the map, leaving scores dead and missing, and thousands homeless.

To some, the school represented the depth of the tragedy that had struck the area, as Filipinos were struck hard by the image of 200 schoolchildren and teachers buried alive in a sea of mud, rock and soil.

Rescue efforts were centered on locating the school in the hope of finding survivors. But in the end, rescuers lost the battle against time and the elements, and the buried school was consigned to its fate.

In the aftermath of the tragedy,

Quezon City, one of the richest cities in the country, has extended a hand to help residents in the small barangay pick up the pieces and start anew.

For Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr., healing and recovery can begin once a new school has been built to replace the old one.

The Quezon City government turned over an initial amount of P5.3 million to Southern Leyte for the construction of a new school building in the barangay.

"The amount may not be enough but it manifests our deepest sympathies and brotherly condolences to the Southern Leyte victims," Belmonte said during the turnover ceremony at Quezon City Hall Bulwagan last week.

Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Lerias personally received the amount during the turnover ceremony.

Belmonte and Lerias also signed a memorandum of agreement on the construction of the school building.

Under the agreement, a donation amounting to P6 million will be used to build a two-story school building with 12 classrooms that stand to benefit 200 pupils.

The school shall be constructed in an area that has been declared safe by disaster management authorities to prevent a repeat of the tragedy, according to the agreement.

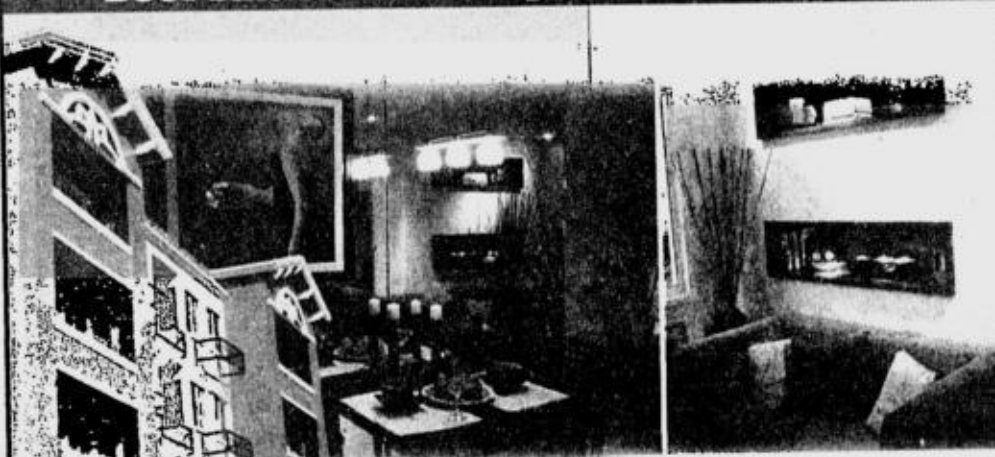
The City Council earlier approved a resolution allocating P5 million for the relief and rehabilitation of the landslide victims.

Belmonte, on the other hand, collected an additional P1 million through a fund-raising program at City Hall.

The P700,000 balance will be given once the project is nearing completion.

Belmonte said building a new school to replace the old one is both timely and vital as the people of Barangay Guinsaung, especially its schoolchildren, take the first few steps on the path to recovery.

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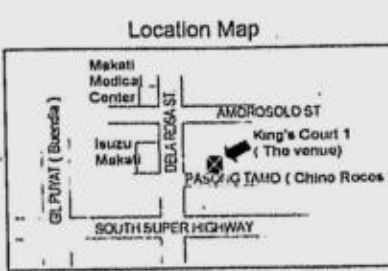
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Per DTI NCR permit # 0930 Series of 2006



WORKERS at the 168 Shopping Mall in Divisoria wait for the establishment to open, days after customs operatives conducted a raid.

REM ZAMORA

Business groups laud 168 raid

By Leila B. Salaverria

SEVERAL BUSINESS GROUPS YESTERDAY lauded the Bureau of Customs' recent raid on the 168 Shopping Mall in Manila, with a trader calling the operation an encouraging sign in the fight against smuggling.

One of the groups, the Fair Trade Alliance (FTA), even offered to provide the BOC with lawyers to help prosecute individuals and companies that violate customs laws.

FTA executive director Rene Ofreno said that with the raid, local industries have gained confidence in the government's antismuggling program.

"The signs are encouraging. Maybe this is now the real thing we have long been waiting for," FTA lead convenor Wigberto Tañada said in a statement.

During the raid conducted last Thursday, over 500 customs personnel seized the goods of stall owners who failed to prove that they had paid taxes for imported items being sold in their store.

Other groups which supported the BOC raid were the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP), the Philippine Exporters Confederation (Philexport) and the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chamber of Commerce Inc. (FCCCCI).

Next step

"Hopefully, the next step is that we see big-time smugglers sent to jail and erring retailers of 168 mall being charged and prosecuted immediately. I hope BOC will not let up in its anti-smuggling drive," said PCCI president Donald Dee.

Donat De.

FCCCI president Francis Chua also commended Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales for his "tenacity."

"For the first time, we have a customs commissioner who is not afraid of big-time smuggling syndicates," he said.

Chua also lauded the recent arrest of suspected smuggler Samuel Lee by the police. Lee, whom the police had described as a known plastic resin smuggler, has been charged with violating the country's tariff and customs code.

The BOC said the government could collect an estimated P700 million in taxes, duties and penalties following the raid on the mall.

The mall has around 800 tenants selling various items like shoes, clothes, toys and school and office supplies.

P75,000 worth of shabu seized in Pasay

AGENTS OF THE PHILIPPINE DRUG Enforcement Agency (PDEA) yesterday raided three houses in a crowded residential area in Pasay City, where they seized around P75,000 worth of suspected shabu.

Two persons identified as Paking Bonos and Roberto Quijano were arrested during the three-hour operation on Tramo Street in Barangay 46, Zone 6. Authorities said they were looking for a third suspect identified as Archie Navarete, who was not around during the raid.

"We received reports that the sale of shabu is rampant in the area. The place is crowded, there are many people, and it's conducive to drugs," Senior Supt. Abe Lemos of PDEA's Metro Manila Regional Office said in a phone interview.

Seized from the three suspects' houses were 61 sachets which contained 25 grams of suspected shabu estimated to be worth P75,000. A small vault containing around P500,000 in cash was also taken from Navarete's house as the money, according to

Lemos, may have come from drug pushing.

Lemos said the PDEA would file charges of drug pushing and possession against the three suspects.

"At least they would know that there is no letup in our antidrug operations," he told the INQUIRER.

Lemos added that 15 other persons who were inside the three houses at the time of the operation, including the suspects' relatives and friends, would be placed under investigation and tested for drug use. Tarra V. Quismundo

MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2006

The WORLD

A7

WORLD BRIEFS

Americans want Democrats in Congress

WASHINGTON—Most Americans want Democrats to take control of Congress in November mid-term elections, while 34 percent prefer a Republican Congress, a Newsweek Poll said Saturday. President George W. Bush's approval rating hit its lowest score in the Newsweek poll, the news-magazine said in a statement, citing recent events, such as the Dubai ports controversy and the upcoming third anniversary of the Iraq war. Only 36 percent of American adults approve of the way the president is handling his job, according to results of the survey conducted on Thursday and Friday. Sixty-four percent are dissatisfied with the way things are going in the United States at this time, while only 30 percent are satisfied.

AFP

Steaming website

ANCHORAGE, Alaska—Want to peer into the steaming summit of an erupting volcano without risking death? Anyone with an Internet connection and a computer can do just that, thanks to about 30 cameras and other recording devices set up on Alaska's Augustine Volcano that are streaming information to a website hosted by the Alaska Volcano Observatory, a joint federal-state office. The site <http://www.avo.alaska.edu/activity/Augustine.php> has received over 253 million hits since the start of the year, becoming a popular destination for everyone from scientists to amateur volcano buffs who want to keep tabs on the restless 1,260-meter volcano. "The Web has really revolutionized information dissemination and consequently the level of interest and knowledge of the public," said Shan de Silva, a volcanologist and professor at the University of North Dakota.

Reuters

Iran frees most prominent dissident



GANJI

REUTERS

TEHRAN—Iran's most prominent political prisoner, dissident Akbar Ganji, was released late Friday night after six years in prison. Visibly thinner and sporting a bushy beard, Ganji smiled and greeted family and friends Saturday but refused to make any comments. "He has decided not to talk due to his physical conditions. He should not get tired," Molai explained. Ganji, 46, was sentenced to six years in prison in 2001 after he wrote articles implicating several regime officials in a string of gruesome murders of opposition intellectuals and writers in 1998—crimes that shocked Iran. He did not give names, and instead kept readers guessing over the identity of the "Master Key" and the "Gray Eminence"—but the nicknames were widely interpreted as referring to former President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and former Intelligence Minister Ali Fallahian.

AFP

Parkinson's drug linked to gambling

WASHINGTON—Medical researchers are investigating suspicions that drugs prescribed to treat Parkinson's disease could turn patients into compulsive gamblers, the Washington Post reported on Sunday. Scientists at the Food and Drug Administration have found a strong association between pathological gambling and the drugs, which boost the level of dopamine in the brain, according to the newspaper. Dopamine, a chemical naturally produced in the human body, plays a key role in the way the brain controls movements. A shortage of dopamine causes Parkinson's disease. But the chemical is also associated with addictive behaviors such as drug use and pleasurable experiences such as sex and food. Researchers, according to the Washington Post, are looking into the possibility that drugs for treating Parkinson's are turning "some patients into obsessive pleasure seekers."

AFP

PARIS—CALM RETURNED TO Paris early Sunday after riot police tear-gassed scores of demonstrators in the wake of a demonstration by an estimated million people who took to the streets of France to protest a widely unpopular new labor law.

Hundreds of young demonstrators defied police following a peaceful march through Paris which attracted up to 350,000 people, hurling objects at officers who eventually drove them back, charging the crowd and using tear gas grenades.

Vehicles were set on fire and overturned, and nearby windows smashed. There were 166 arrests, while seven policemen and 17 demonstrators were injured in the unrest at the eastern Place de la Nation that lasted for six hours, police said.

About 500 students then marched on Paris' Sorbonne university in the Latin Quarter, the scene of earlier clashes.

Chanting "Liberate the Sorbonne!" the students charged and removed some barriers erected by police to block access to the university, and threw a Molotov cocktail at a riot police van, but a fire was quickly extinguished.

Police drove back the students with water cannon, and then deployed in front of the remaining barriers to prevent their advance.

In the Mediterranean port of Marseille hundreds of militants demonstrated, some trying to set fire to the entrance to the town hall before police drove them back. One officer was injured and six youths were arrested, police said.

There were also clashes in the northern city of Lille with police responding with tear gas, as well as Grenoble in the east and Clermont-Ferrand in the center.

Unions said 1.5 million demonstrators took part in more than 150 rallies across the country against the center-right government's First Employment Contract (CPE)—drawing students, workers, pensioners and families.

The interior ministry put the overall turnout at just over 500,000, but unions urged Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin to heed the message from the street.

The CPE, a contract for under 26-year-olds that can be terminated in the first two years without explanation, is supposed to encourage employers to take on young staff.

Drawn up in the wake of riots late last year in high-immigration city suburbs—where youth unemployment can be as high as 50 percent—the CPE was approved by parliament last week as part of a wider equal opportunities law.

But the opposition says the CPE is a step back from hard-won labor rights, and will make it more difficult than ever for young people to find long-term employment.

"The demand for withdrawal of the CPE is gathering ever greater force. Seventy percent of the French want it withdrawn, and 80 percent of young people. The government is in a dead-end," said Bernard Thibault of the CGT union.

"Today we can clearly see that the mobilization is stronger than ever. Either the government listens to reason and withdraws the CPE, or it will be obliged to do so next week—because we will be back in the street," said Bruno Julliard of the UNEF students' union.



YOUNG protesters during a demonstration in Lille, northern France, March 18.

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Manila Water

Upgrade of distribution lines in Mandaluyong City will cause several temporary water interruptions

Manila Water will undertake several projects in Mandaluyong City to further improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. Unfortunately, several temporary water service cutoffs will be needed in different scheduled dates to fully complete the project which will involve the looping and interconnection of pipelines. The first interruption will start 10:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 21, 2006, up to 6:00 a.m., March 22. Areas affected will be: Bgys. Bagong Silang, Hagdang Bato Itaas, Hagdang Bato Libis, Daang Bakal, Poblacion, Burol, Pagasa and Harapin ang Bukas.

The second interruption will start 10:00 p.m., Thursday, March 23, up to 6:00 a.m., March 24. Affected areas will be Bagong Silang and Hagdang Bato Libis.

Meanwhile, the third interruption will start 10:00 p.m., Monday, March 27, up to 6:00 a.m., March 28. Affected areas will be Barangay Daang Bakal.

Manila Water Company is advising all residents of the said areas to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.



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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Egypt suffers first death from bird flu

CAIRO—A 30-YEAR-OLD EGYPTIAN woman has died of bird flu, becoming the country's first human victim of the virus,

the health ministry said on Saturday. It said the woman from Qaloubiyah province, about 40 km north of Cairo,

where the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain has been detected in poultry, was taken ill on Wednesday.

"They (doctors) took samples for analysis at the Ministry of Health laboratories ... They confirmed she was in-

fectured with bird flu. She died on Friday morning," a ministry statement said, adding the woman had been given Tamiflu, a drug used to treat suspected cases of bird flu.

Israel said on Saturday that four poultry workers suspected of having bird flu had tested negative for the virus, after the country detected its first cases of H5N1 in birds on Friday.

Bird flu has spread across Europe, Africa and parts of Asia and killed at least 98 people worldwide since 2003.

Although hard to catch, people can contract bird flu after coming into contact with infected birds. Scientists fear the virus could mutate into a form that could pass easily between humans, triggering a pandemic in which millions could die.

The World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed that Egypt had reported its first human case of bird flu.

Dr. Hassan al-Bushra, WHO's regional adviser for communicable diseases surveillance, said the H5N1 bird flu virus had been found in a blood sample taken from the woman, and that other samples were being tested for further confirmation.

Egypt reported its first cases of bird flu in poultry flocks last month. Media and state reports say H5N1 has now been detected in at least 17 of Egypt's 26 governorates and the city of Luxor.

Egyptian farmers say the poultry market—worth about 17 billion Egyptian pounds (\$3 billion) and supporting up to 3 million people—has been devastated.

Israeli workers culled thousands of turkeys and chickens but authorities said further tests were needed to confirm whether an outbreak on two farms was of the deadly H5N1 strain of bird flu.

The health ministry said four people who had been suspected of having bird flu had tested negative.

Israeli officials said poultry in the infected areas and their surroundings would be culled and the carcasses buried in underground pits.

In a rare act of cooperation, Israel was also testing dead fowl found in the West Bank and Gaza on behalf of the Palestinian Authority.

Reuters



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A DRIVING Brandon Cablay of San Miguel Beer opts to make a pass as Rafi Reavis of Coca Cola applies pressure. ERIK ARAZAS

Tense Tigers survive Beermen's late surge

By Musong R. Castillo

COCA-COLA HAS BEEN ON EDGE RECENTLY, but the results have been the same and the Tigers are continuing to surprise the Gran Matador Brandy-PBA Philippine Cup field.

The Tigers won for the fourth straight time last night, thanks in part to two freakish San Miguel blunders in the end game of a 75-72 decision that kept Coke in the elimination round lead.

The Tigers almost blew a 16-point lead and had to scramble in the final minutes to eke out the win in the game that featured the tournament's two hottest clubs at the Araneta Coliseum.

"We got lucky again," Coke coach Binky Favis said.

In the second game, Alaska got its

GAMES WEDNESDAY
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7:35 p.m.—Purefoods
vs. Barangay Ginebra

second win in four outings with a 99-84 rout of Air21, which dropped to 1-3.

John Arigo hit two charities with 11.5 ticks left off a Brandon Cablay foul before the

Beermen threw away the chance to forge extension with sloppy ball handling at the other end.

It was the second straight close shave for the Tigers counting their 80-72 victory over Purefoods last week. The past two victories have been a far departure to the first two, where the Tigers blew away their foes by a combined 16.5 points.

The scores:

COCA-COLA 75—Arigo 16, Singson 13, Antonio 10, Mamaril 9, Peek 9, Reavis 7, Abanillas 5, Walwright 4, Miranda 2, Morano 0.

SAN MIGUEL 72—Ildelfonso 20, Selgie 16, Racela 10, Pena 10, Noble 6, Adriano 4, Calagulo 3, Montiveros 3, Kong 0, Cablay 0.

Quarters: 20-all, 38-36, 58-51, 75-72

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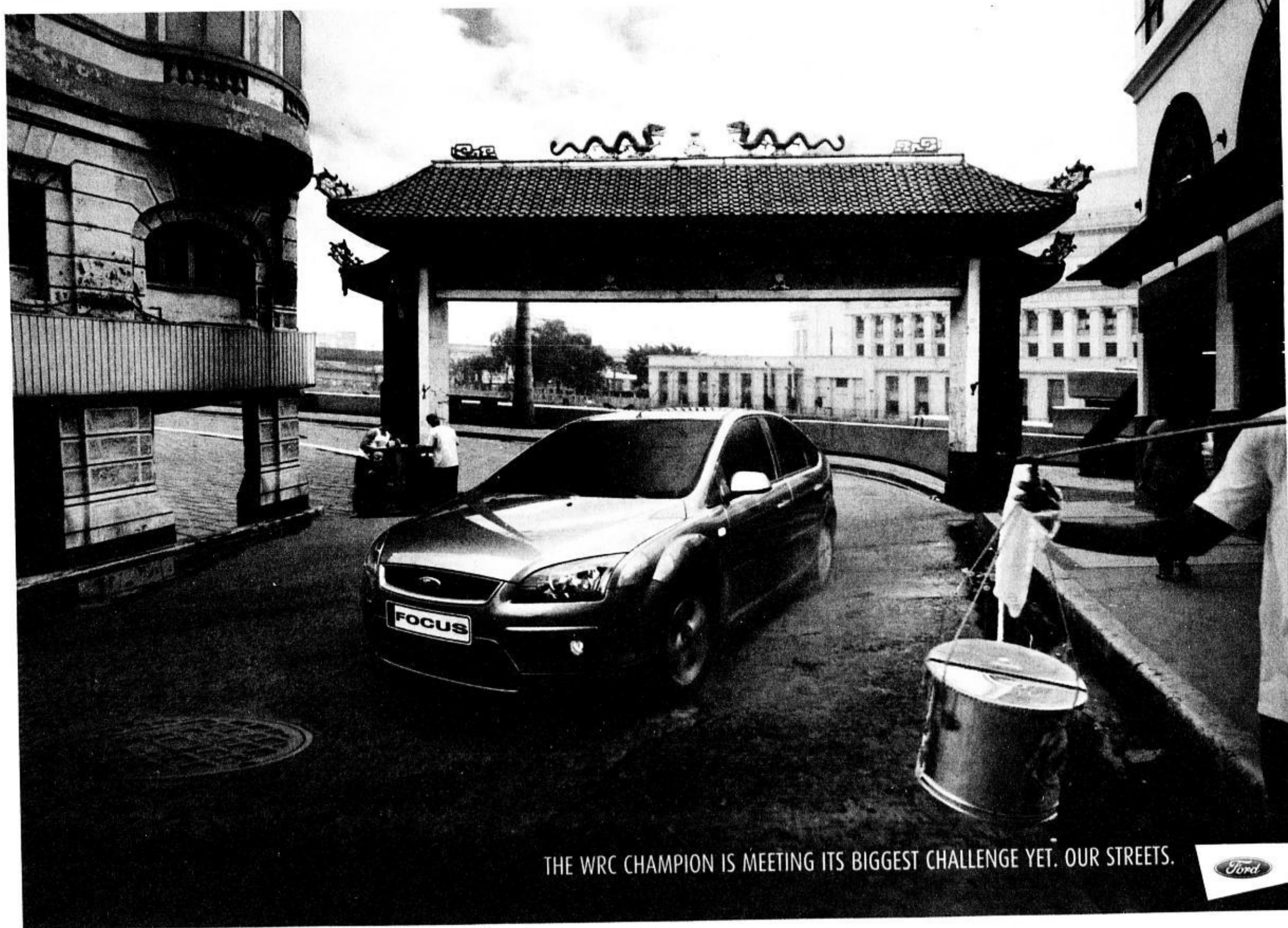
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Lina sticks to his guns on Fiba suspension

By Jasmine W. Payo

BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION OF THE Philippines (BAP) president Joey Lina reiterated his belief yesterday that the international basketball federation (Fiba) will not lift the suspension on the country even with a new basketball federation already created.

"Forming a new body while [the] BAP remains Fiba's member in good standing will not achieve the goal of lifting Fiba's suspension," said Lina, who lamented that people were trying to discredit him.

"It seems that I'm being unreasonable because I'm not joining their group," he said. Swimming president Mark Joseph, who



LINA

suspension from international meets.

"Mr. Lina's refusal to cooperate will not change anything," said Joseph.

"My opinion (last Saturday) urging Mr. Lina to reconsider his decision to break fellowship with the major stakeholders for

heads the Philippine Olympic Committee basketball task force, said his group has no plans to woo Lina just to be able to fully satisfy the requirements set forth by the Fiba for the lifting of the country's

sake of unity in basketball, was mine alone. I do not presume to speak for the POC at all," he further clarified.

Lina has accused the POC and its task force of keeping him away from unification talks. He added that "without even conferring" with him, the POC and the other stakeholders decided to form Pilipinas Basketball to replace the BAP.

"Mr. Lina's accusation that the POC has not been honest and transparent is uncalled for," said Joseph.

Joseph stressed that the group is simply abiding by the memorandum of understanding between the Fiba and the POC that tasked the five stakeholders to form a new basketball federation in the country.

Lina insisted that the best way to lift the Fiba suspension is to incorporate the major stakeholders into a restructured BAP. The POC and the stakeholders, he added, already agreed upon this process after four meetings. But another process—the formation of a new federation—was "abruptly agreed upon" during the fifth meeting, which Lina failed to attend.

Backed by the PBA, PBL, UAAP and the NCAA, the structure of Pilipinas Basketball will be presented by POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco to Fiba secretary general Patrick Baumann for approval this month.

Unless the suspension is lifted, the country cannot compete in all international events, including the Asian Games this December.

Much-awaited showdown

CLEAN LIVING



Manolo R. Inigo

NO DOUBT ABOUT it, the legions of racing fans are looking forward to a rematch between two of the country's outstanding gallopers, Real Spicy and Speed Advantage. Both horses have met previously and scored a victory over each other, thus making their return meeting a most keenly awaited clash.

On record, Real Spicy has had a more fruitful and active schedule this year compared with Speed Advantage. Owned by sports patron Hermie Esguerra, Real Spicy recently made a rousing debut as a four-year-old by winning the 2006 Philracom Commissioner's Cup at the Santa Ana Park on March 12. "He (Real Spicy) is really in top condition," said the proud owner from Paridel, Bulacan.

Undeclared in four consecutive races this year, Real Spicy is a handsome island-born chestnut colt by Real Quiet, a two-leg winner of the US Triple Crown, out of Spicy Tale. He is being honed for two more races before the staging of this year's Silver Cup on May 14, eyeing another major stakes race victory over an expected banner field which includes arch rival Speed Advantage.

Flying the colors of the Bobby Yutadco Stable, Speed Advantage is a four-year-old bay colt by Royal Premier out of Trudy Capote (US). He is bred by real estate executive Toti Carifio.

Both horses are noted speedsters, but many say their most remarkable triumphs were registered when they were backed by stablemates.

WHO RUNS DANCE SPORT IN RP?

Former congressman and now POC president Jose Cojuangco Jr. clarified recently that the Philippine Professional Dance Sport Association under the leadership of Stanley or Stan Alexander, an Australian, is not authorized by the POC to conduct any training and promote dance sport in the Philippines.

But how on earth could the Department of Education and the Commission for Higher Education ignore this POC ruling by allowing Alexander's group to provide full technical support and guidance to the DepEd and CHED? What on earth is wrong with these people?

The rule is crystal clear: The Dance Sport Council of the Philippines is the national sport association in the country that is accredited by the POC and the Philippine Sports Commission. The DSCP, as an NSA under Republic Act 6847, has the exclusive technical control over the promotion and development of dance sport in the Philippines.

In her letter to Dr. Fe Hidalgo, DepEd officer-in-charge, and Carito Puno, CHED chair, DSCP president Becky Garcia said, "Our organization is the recognized NSA for dance sport pursuant to Section 3 of RA 6847, an act creating and establishing the Philippine Sports Commission, defining its powers, functions and responsibilities, appropriating funds therefore, and for other purposes."

"The Dance Sport Council of the Philippines has the exclusive technical control over the promotion and development of dance sport in the Philippines. We just successfully hosted the 23rd Southeast Asian Games in Cebu where dance sport was included for the first time and won the first two gold medals and two silver medals for the Philippines. We have definitely made the Philippines and our council proud."

"Mr. Alexander and his group are not authorized to provide technical support and guidance to the Department of Education for the inclusion of dance sport in the 2006 Palarong Pambansa as well as to implement dance sport in the school curriculum. Thus, we seek your cooperation and assistance through the nullification of any existing agreements with Stan or Stanley Alexander."

The DSCP also said it was endorsing instead the Professional Dance Teachers Association of the Philippines headed by lawyer Ma. Cecilia Katigbak "as the authorized training arm of the DSCP to undertake the technical support and guidance to the education department and the Commission for Higher Education and all other government agencies."

And while on the subject of dance sport, I would like to doff my hat to the winners of the recent First Quarter Ranking and Competitions led by TV host and actress Regine Tolentino, who topped the Grade E Latin category with partner Greg Dimaricut.

The other winners were Emmanuel Reyes-Maira Rosete, John Erolle Melencio-Dearlie Gerodias, Mark Leonel Perez-Yoshiko Motoyama, Crisanto Parado-Jocelyn Macopia, Gemini Sangual-Susan Medalle, Manolito Mendoza-Annalyn Viray, Arthur Eroles-Jenevieve Camacho, Benny Lao-Merlyn del Mundo, Crisaldo Rendon-Eleanor Hayco, Wilfred Glenn Sto. Domingo-Gilda Lim, PSA awardees Reynato Rener Mercado-Judith Anne Melencio, Roan Jett Fernandez-Jonnallyn Geminiano, Jumil Balcasol-Virganie Oyao, Jefferson Pimentel-Daine Xylene Balili and Virginiño Legarde-Divina Lamosa.

Miller, Alapag get monkey off TNT's back

By June Navarro

HONG KONG—WILLIE MILLER AND JIMMY Alapag found their touch from the outside and Talk 'N Text finally got its signals right, torching Purefoods, 88-66, Sunday in the Purefoods Chunkee in the Gran Matador Brandy-PBA Philippine Cup.

Defying the chill at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium here, Alapag and Miller combined for seven triples that triggered a breakaway and finally pull the Phone Pals out of a 0-2 hole.

"We just wanted to get the monkey off our backs," said Talk 'N Text coach Derrick Pumaren after the Phone Pals survived a third-quarter scare from Kerby Raymundo before wildly cheering overseas Filipino workers here.

Miller finished with 28 points, including four straight treys at one stretch.

Raymundo led a furious rally that pulled Purefoods within eight, 52-64, before Alapag drained two crushing three-pointers that eventually sent the Giants to their second defeat in three games.

"We gave the crowd a really good game and

showed what Talk 'N Text can do," said Pumaren, who scored his first victory as Phone Pals head coach. "This is a treat for the OFWs here."

Tickets already sold out a few days back but for some reason, the gallery section of the 3,000-seat arena wasn't filled to the brim.

The Giants opened the game as cold as the frosty air-conditioning system of the stadium, missing their first five attempts from the field and watching shooter James Yap uncharacteristically miss five straight free throws.

The Talk 'N Text lead ballooned to 80-55 following Alapag's treys.

Philippine consul general Rufino Vicente was present during the ceremonial toss for the game, only the PBA's second overseas match in history.

The scores:

TALK 'N TEXT 88—Miller 28, Carey 14, Alapag 11, Taulava 10, Cardona 8, Avenida 7, Pablo 5, Ferriols 5, Villoria 0, Meneses 0, Julinio 0, Cantonjos 0.

PUREFOODS 66—Raymundo 24, Pingris 15, J. Yap 9, R. Yap 5, Limpot 4, Artadi 3, Tejada 3, Evangelista 2, Castillo 1, Billones 0, Yee 0, Gamba 0.

Quarters: 30-16, 46-31, 54-52, 88-66



WILLIE Miller gets his game—and the Phone Pals—going.

Iligan Crusaders trounce Cotabato Braves

ILIGAN CITY—PRE-SEASON FAVORITE ILIGAN LIVED up to its billing Saturday by whipping expansion team North Cotabato, 96-78, in the 2006 NBC national basketball championship at the packed MSU-IIT gym here.

The Firefly Lightings-backed Crusaders of Mayor Lawrence Cruz and team manager Freddie Siao led from start to finish, but they needed a league-record 36-point quarter in the payoff period to turn the game into a rout.

Former UST Tiger Derrick Hubalde and ex-Laguna playmaker Marlon Kalaw combined for 13 points to spark that record binge in the last 10 minutes and hold off Gov.

Manny Pifol's Braves, who rallied to within a basket, 58-60, behind the incursions of Michael Etrata, Rex Ligue and Jerold Cabanog.

Kalaw won player of the game honors.

With their first victory, the Crusaders matched the 1-0 card of Valencia Golden Harvest, which nipped Pagadian in Friday's southern division opener in Pagadian City.

Spring Cooking Oil-Parafaque and Batang Tagaytay also carry 1-0 slates in the northern division of the tournament sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods,

Firefly Lightings, Molten and Prime Channel.

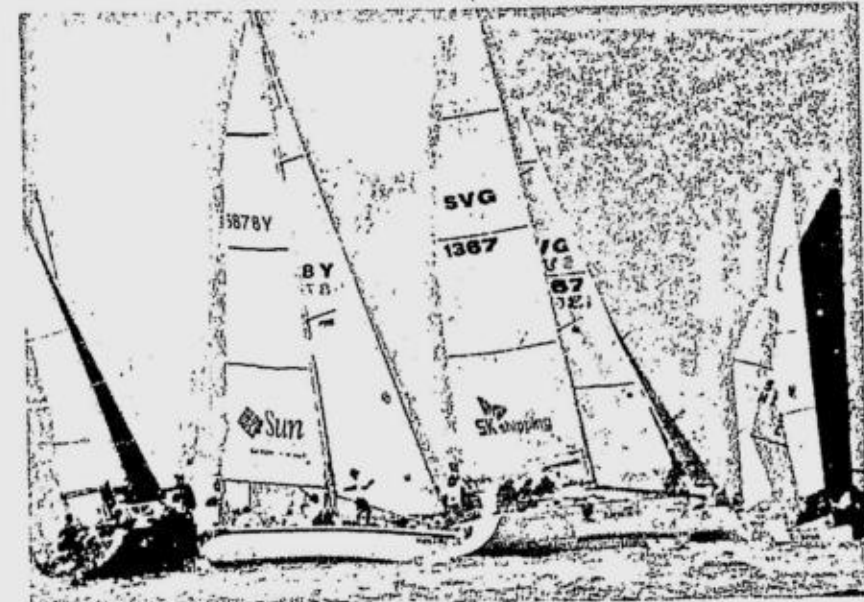
"The boys were fun to watch on the court," said Iligan coach Jun Longalong. "They followed our game plan to the letter. The crowd's support was quite overwhelming." NBC games are aired at 10 p.m. daily over Prime Channel.

The scores:

ILIGAN 96—Kalaw 23, Hubalde 21, Go 11, Nicdao 9, Ompling 9, Matias 7, Ayodelle 6, Canoy 4, Calence 3, Sagad 2, Gandarosa 1.

N. COTABATO 78—Etrata 14, Ligue 12, Binas 10, Clar 9, Jawod 4, Reyes 4, Allado 2, Coldura 2, Del Monte 2, Dagalan 2.

Quarters: 24-16, 41-33, 60-53, 96-78



BREAKTHROUGH VICTORY: Selma Star-SK Shipping (third from left, SVG 1367), skippered by the Philippines' Jun Aveccilla, jockeys for position at the start of Cruiser-Racer competition of the Singapore Straits Regatta off Batam, Indonesia, one of the legs of the recent sea race which the Filipino ruled. Aveccilla's sleek Beneteau 36.7 yacht won against a tough field in her maiden international race. Already the winner of the IRC B division of the Standard Insurance-Smart Infinity Manila-to-Boracay Race last month, Aveccilla is also expected to guide Selma Star to line honors in the President's Cup Regatta in Subic Bay on April 18 to 22.

Kilimanjaro conquers Chairman's Cup field

By Musong R. Castillo

CARMONA, CAVITE—KILIMANJARO CAME up with a mammoth finishing kick under the superb handling of Patty Dilema last night to overpower the field in the P1 million 2006 Philracom Chairman's Cup at the San Lazaro Leisure Park here.

Sent off as the fourth choice, Kilimanjaro waited for the speedballs to tire before Dilema wheeled her into position rounding the far turn.

The three-year-old bay colt by Khoozam out of Peggy B rallied wide and picked off a fagged out Manila's Gem with ease to win by close to two lengths.

Juggernaut, last year's champion juvenile and tipped as the brightest hope to become the next Triple Crown champion, was scratched at the last minute. Reports said the undefeated filly had bone spurs in a front leg.

Manila's Gem, the speedster handled by Jessie B. Guce, labored the entire mile behind Million Dollar, who refused to yield the lead, and heavy favorite King's Dominion who cornered sales of 381,494 out of the total forecast pool of P1,171,328.

King's Dominion, another colt piloted by veteran Antonio B. Alcasid, actually grabbed the lead in the backstretch where Kilimanjaro lagged at the tail-end of the nine-horse pack, a good eight lengths behind.

But Dilema applied the whip and Kilimanjaro responded, zooming into contention in the final quarter en route to victory, worth P600,000 for owner Michael Trilliana.

Kilimanjaro clocked 1:42 on quarters of 24.5, 24, 25.5, 28 over 1,600 meters.

Manila's Gem settled for the P225,000 runner-up purse, while the third-finishing Million Dollar won P125,000 and fourth placer King's Dominion took P50,000.

Sta. Elena Cup stakes P6M in prizes

THE 10TH EDITION OF THE STA. ELENA Cup member-guest invitational tournament will be held from March 30 to April 2 with prizes worth more than P6 million up for grabs.

A BMW 3-Series, a Toyota Camry and a Mazda 3, plus golf carts from Yamaha, all with a combined value of about P4 million, will be staked as hole-in-one prizes on holes to be designated by the multi-awarded Sta. Elena Golf Club.

This will be apart from an exciting raffle package that includes Omega watches, an Alaska cruise for two inclusive of airfare, appliances and equipment, and cash prizes of P500,000 and P300,000.

Sponsors include Omega, Mizuno, Royal Caribbean, The Golf Shop of Baron Travel, Sta. Elena Properties, Pepsi, Aviva and Intellicare. Hole-in-one sponsors are

Call Center golf tees off at Midlands today

A HUNDRED PLAYERS OR SO ARE SEEING ACTION IN THE CALL CENTER EXECUTIVE Golf Challenge 2 today at the picturesque Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club. Tee-off time is 9 a.m. after the registration which starts at 7 a.m. The 18-hole invitational tournament, staged by Contact Center Association of the Philippines, is supported chiefly by Plantronics as the title sponsor with Avaya and PLDT Business Solutions as co-presenters. A brand-new Toyota Innova will be awarded to the player who scores the first ace on the 17th hole. Prizes will be awarded to the top finishers in the various handicap divisions. Participants will come from various Call Centers which are members of CCAP, according to Raffy David and Jojo Ulligan, head organizers of the tournament.

Toyota Motor Philippines Inc., Prestige Cars Pasong Tamo, Mazda Greenhills, Kart Plaza Manufacturing and Club Car.

The event was booked in record time.

A total of 226 two-player team slots were filled up in less than two days.

Practice rounds starting tomorrow will allow guests to familiarize them-

selves with the conditions of the course that has been consistently chosen as the country's best and among Asia's finest.

Venzon Paz and Bobby Inigo are the defending net champions while Kevin Tayao and Raymund Sangil are returning to shoot for a repeat of their low gross victory last year.

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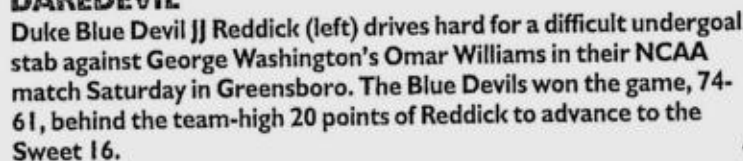
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Live interview with Dr. Pineda on Damayan March 20, 2006 at 1p.m. PTV 4. A. Pineda Medical Clinic Suite 812 Medical Towers Makati, Rufino Street Legaspi Village, Makati City MANILA 8130691 • DAVAO 2212682 www.pinedahair.com

Cuba, Japan reach final round of World Baseball Classic

US major league millionaires were ousted in the second round, a humbling 2-1 loss Thursday to Mexico sending surprised Japan into the semifinals instead. **AFF**

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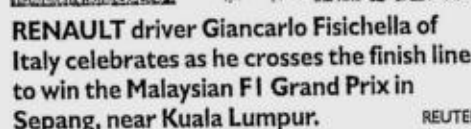


Heat survive listless Wade

Gary Payton put Miami in front for good when he dropped one of two attempts from the foul line with just over two minutes to play and

● **NBA ON TV:**
Solar Sports—Miami vs New York, 8:30
a.m. (8 p.m. replay)
RPN-9—LA Lakers vs Cleveland, 7:30 p.m.

Fisichella leads Renault's 1-2 finish

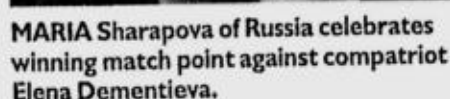


He finish behind teammate Felipe Massa in sixth place Sunday.

ing into the wall. After starting last and finishing third at Bahrain, he was sixth on the grid here. **Al**

Sharapova bags 11th title 'Rock' keeps

Sharapova dominated the match with powerful, well-placed groundstrokes that kept the 24-year-old Dementieva off-balance. **A**



'Rock' keeps heavyweight title via draw

Judges Nobuaki Uratani and Tom Kaczmarek each had it 114-114, while John Stewart saw a Rahman rout, 117-111. **A**

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Gorres decisions Thai foe, claims OPBF crown

By Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

MANDAUE CITY—Z "THE DREAM" GORRES dominated Waenpetch Chuwatana of Thailand throughout to score a lopsided unanimous decision victory and claim the vacant Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation super flyweight title in the main event of a 10-bout card here.

Gorres used his superior skills to thwart Chuwatana's surges en route to a 118-109, 119-107, 120-106 win.

The win improved Gorres' record to 23-1-1 with 12 KOs. It also earned him a fight against a still undetermined foe in the May 20 undercard of the Marco Antonio Barrera-Rocky Juarez showdown at the Staples Center in California.

Chuwatana had vowed to go after Gorres' belly but failed to inflict damage as the shifty Filipino frustrated the Thai with lateral movements.

A knockdown scored by Gorres in the third round, and the one-point deduction assessed on Chuwatana in the eighth for excessive holding made matters worse for the Thai brawler.

After winning the first two rounds, Gorres unleashed his feared left uppercut late in the third, sending Chuwatana on all fours.



HANDY WIN: Z Gorres proves his worth.

In the main supporting bout, Rex "Wakee" Salud-protégé Jojo Bardon bucked a knockdown in the second round to score a split decision victory over Rocky Fuentes of the ALA Stable.

Meanwhile, WBO Asia Pacific super-featherweight champ Czar Amosot won by unanimous decision over another Thai, Dechao Bankluaygym.

Other results: AJ Banel (ALA Stable) stopped Dechapol Bankluaygym in the opening round; Robert Allan decided Robert Rubillar; Ray Calton (ALA Stable) knocked out Joy Adrian in the opening round; Glen Mascampo decided Nori Iwatani; Frank Albia decided Joe Galamilon; Nic Banel decided Rolly Baclay; and Ninolito Jalnaiz TKO'd Noel Acasao in the second round.

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- Entries can be dropped in drop boxes at designated stores within your area, or you may also send your entries to:
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86 Mayflower St., Mandaluyong City
- This is a nationwide promo covering areas of the eighteen (18) business developers from Sarimanok Feeds Company, Inc.
- All employees of Sarimanok/Univet, Unilab, hired agencies and relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity and affinity are disqualified from joining the promo.
- Power Trio winners can choose from the following bloodlines: Sweater, Roundhead, Kelso, and Hatch.
- In the monthly draw, there will be 108 winners and 423 consolation prizes to be given away.
- 1st Prize- Power Trio 3rd Prize- Breeding Showcase Consolation Prize- 12 Gift Packs
- 2nd Prize- Conditioning Showcase
- In the grand draw, there will be a total of 40 winners from all areas and 192 consolation prizes will be given away.
- 1st Prize- Power Trio 4th Prize- Conditioning Showcase
- 2nd Prize- 21" Sony Colored TV 5th Prize- Breeding Showcase
- 3rd Prize- Sony Mini-Component Consolation Prize- 24 Gift Packs
- Schedule for draws are as follows:
- 1st monthly draw- May 5, 2006
- 2nd monthly draw- June 9, 2006
- Final Draw- July 7, 2006 (86 Mayflower St., Mandaluyong City)
- A BFAD representative will be present during the monthly and grand draws.
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- Promo starts March 1, 2006 and ends on June 30, 2006.

Individuals below 18 years old are not qualified to join.

Winners will be announced in Tukaan, Sundays, 12nn at IBC 13

Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0275 Series of 2006.

Pinoy Cockers derby today

SEVENTY FIGHTS ARE ON TAP IN THE PINOY COCKERS Association of the Philippines 5-cock derby starting at 5 p.m. today at the Makati Coliseum with B-Meg Derby Ace as sponsor. The Jerby entry of Jun Pascual topped the fifth PCAP derby last March 6, while Jake Macasaet's San Vicente Ferrer entry finished second. Macasaet regained the Cocker of the Year race lead with 16 points, followed by Lito Orillaza (Golden Syca, 14.5); Lito Roque (Ika Mae, 14); William Co (Spencer, 14); Jimmy Yasay (Rooster Wild, 13.5); Matt Bitanga (Golden Circle I, 13.5) and Kay Akino entry, 13.5.

SPORTSWATCH

150 fights in SJC finals

THE "UNANG HIRIT NO ENTRY FEE 4-COCK DERBY" championship round starts at 2 p.m. today featuring more than 150 fights and with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as sponsor. Host Aba Badiola said the winners stand to take home P1.2 million. Badiola, in cooperation with SJC management, will also present the "Fastest Win One-Cock Uluhan" on April 3, where five brand new Honda XRM motorcycles are at stake. For inquiries, call 0917-8264018, 725-6563 or 725-5369.

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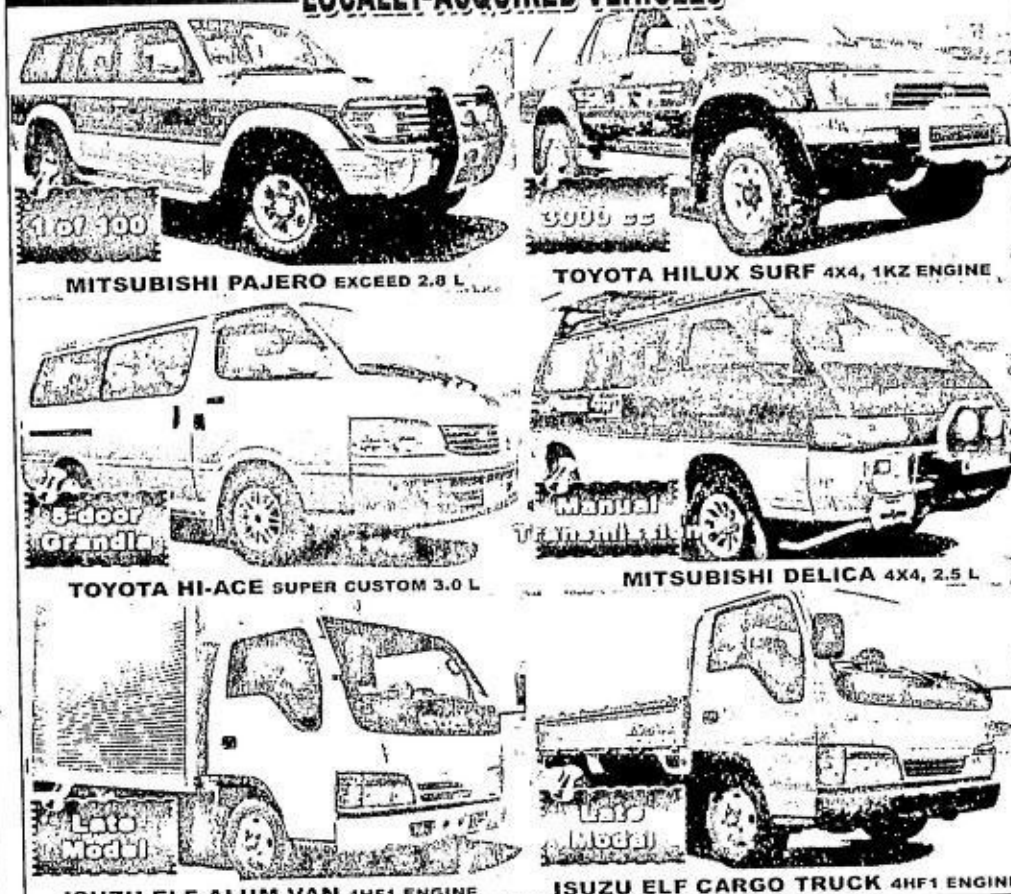
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HIGH-CONCEPT, low-budget films: Sid Haig, Vic Diaz and Subas Herrero in "Big Bird Cage" (above); Diaz and Alona Alegre in "Black Mama" (right).



An A for RP-made B movies

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IF YOU ASK UCLA PROFESSOR Michael Hawkins, Tony Falcon, Pinoy cowboys and women-in-prison flicks are worthy subjects for research and discourse.

In a recent lecture at the University of the Philippines Film Institute in Diliman, Hawkins presented his findings on what he called "women-in-prison" film genre.

To "exploit cheap but skilled labor and the exotic locale," B-movie producer Roger Corman shot such pot-boilers here and hired Filipino artists for work both on and off cam in the early 1970s.

Hawkins is currently writing his Ph.D. dissertation on the subject for the University of California in Los Angeles

UCLA professor
on movies that told
RP history in an
'indirect' way

and has interviewed Corman and director Jack Hill, as well as Filipino producer Cirio H. Santiago and National Artist for Film Eddie Romero.

Romero is credited as executive producer on Hill's "The Big Doll House," released in 1971. That same year, another National Artist for Film, Gerardo de Leon, directed "Women in Cages" (locally shown as "Play Pen"), which

AN A/A2-4

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R-13

3 SHE'S THE MAN
12:35, 3:05, 5:35, 8:05, 10:35
PG-13

4 HOSTEL
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political films in global cinema elicited re-
actions from a number of readers. Their
comments were pretty similar, revolving
around the hope that Filipino filmmakers'Many issues
are still
festering'would also deal with reality, instead of the
fantasies and roseate teen romances that
they have been dishing out lately.Fact is, Philippine cinema has a proud
history of producing political films. Important
films like "Daigdig ng mga Api" and
"The Moises Padilla Story" presaged the
peak of political filmmaking in the '70s and
'80s, when Lino Brocka hit hard with
scorchers like "Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim"
and "Orapronobis."Some say that political filmmaking here
dipped when martial law ended and Fili-
pino filmmakers lost an "enemy" to lash
out against.Truth to tell, however, Ferdinand Marcos
may be gone, but most everybody else is
still around and
many social and po-
litical issues are still
festering and in
need of being dra-
matized and lanced
onscreen.So, what's lack-
ing isn't opportuni-
ty, but many of our
filmmakers' will.
The bald truth is
that quite a number
of them have be-
come too comfortable with compromise, so
they've lost much of their passion and con-
viction that their films can affect how their
viewers think and act.Even our newer digital filmmakers gen-
erally eschew the political mode, choosing
to focus instead on "experimental" romps
and personal stories.This can change only if our filmmakers re-
mind themselves that art is supposed to be,
not a soporific, but an irritant. It's charged
with the necessary task of holding a mirror up
to viewers' faces, so they can see how their re-
ality truly looks, warts and all.To the local movie industry's embarrass-
ment, no feature film has yet been made on
Ninoy Aquino, on the EDSA revolution and
many other major political events in the na-
tion's unfolding history.On the other hand, we're grateful for the
strong political films that have been made,
despite the industry's largely escapist and
trivializing bent—"Bayaning Third World,"
"Bagong Buwan," "Ebolusyon ng Isang
Pamilyang Pilipino," etc.

'Tristan and Isolde'

"TRISTAN and Isolde" sets its story
among the tribes struggling for control
over their territories following the fall of
Rome.In one of the villages, Tristan (James
Franco) is raised by Lord Marke (Rufus
Sewell), who lost his hand while protect-
ing the boy during the Irish raid that killed
Tristan's family.

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 16 BLOCKS
MTRCB: PG-13
1:50, 4:10 LMF2 SHAGGY DOG
MTRCB: GP
12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00 LMF

PREMIERE THEATRE

3 SHE'S THE MAN
MTRCB: PG-13
2:00, 4:25, 6:50, 9:154 V FOR VENDETTA
MTRCB: R-13
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00 LMF

HOSTEL

MTRCB: R-18 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

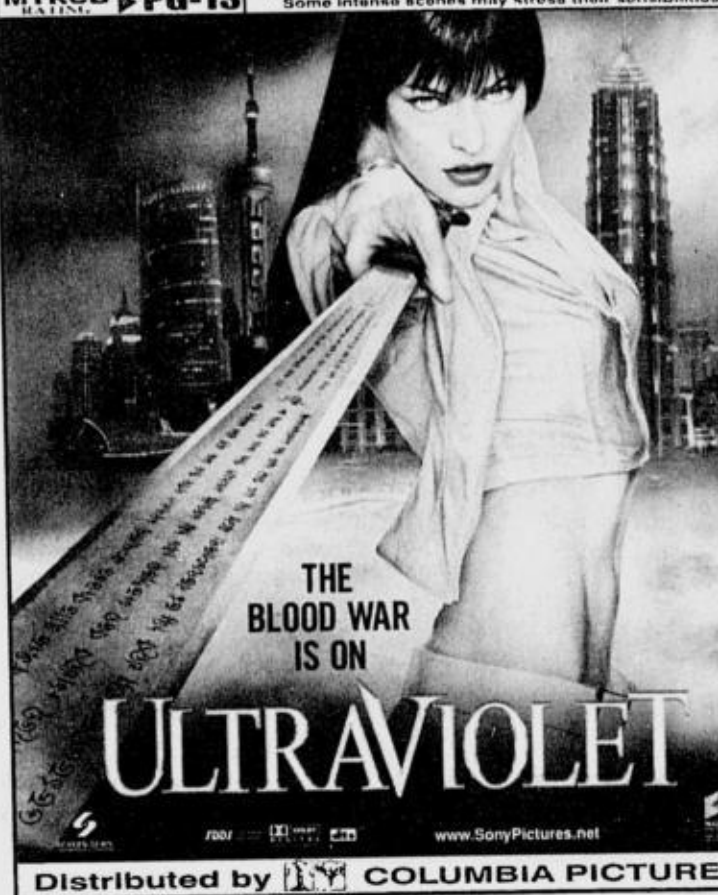
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

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Shangri-La Plaza

MUTANT ACTION BEGINS MARCH 22

MTRCB PG-13 Parents cautioned against bringing kids age 9 & below.
Some intense scenes may stress their sensibilities.

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**"The Shocking Video
that Rocked the Whole Country"**

The Co-Ed. two girls and a boy of barely legal age are
caught having sex on tape. Who are they? Why did they do it?
Where are they now?

The film draws answers from the urban legends that grew
around the controversial sex videos and the result is a hu-
morous narrative with elements of mock documentary.
Leo is a 21-year old co-ed student in a prestigious college.
He dreams of making and starring in his own "dirty movie"
and becomes obsessed with the idea. Leo eggs her girlfriend
Claire to be part of the video. She hesitates but gives in to the
idea soon enough, when she finds her most compelling reason
in the person of a sexy girl named Miles.

Opens MARCH 22
MTRCB Rating: R-18

upclose and personal with JENNIFER LEE
Cinema Lobby
MARCH 22 Ermita 2PM; Galleria 4PM; Metro East 6PM
MARCH 25 Metro East 2PM; Galleria 4PM; Ermita 6PM

With Tristan by
his side, Marke be-
lieves he can unify
his people and rid
England of Irish
rule. But Tristan
harbors a terrible
secret.Wounded and
left dead after bat-
tle, he is nursed
back to health by
Isolde (Sophia
Myles), a mysteri-
ous Irish beauty
who hides him from
her father King
Donnchadh's
forces. But their
passionate affair is
cut short when Tris-
tan is impelled to
return to England,
not knowing if he
will see Isolde
again.A tale of epic bat-
tles, royal intrigue
and timeless pas-
sion, "Tristan and
Isolde" is a long-
time dream project
of executive pro-
ducers Tony and Ri-
dley Scott.The famous film-
makers are fasci-
nated with the
myth of Tristan and
Isolde that originat-
ed from a Celtic leg-
end because it is a
tragic story about
forbidden love, and
because of the col-
orful, tumultuous
time it took place,
between the fall of
the Roman Empire
and the Renais-
sance.The tale even
predates the legend
of Arthur and Guin-
evere in Camelot,
as well as Shake-
speare's "Romeo
and Juliet." But, Ri-
dley Scott observes,
"it is so powerful,
both dramatically
and emotionally,
that it transcends
any setting or
time."MMTA
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PG-132 (DOLBY) SHAGGY DOG
GP3 (DOLBY) SHE'S THE MAN
PG-134 (DOLBY) V FOR VENDETTA
R13

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R18Filinvest
FESTIVAL
CINEMA

(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY) YOURS MINE & OURS

2 (DOLBY) FINAL DESTINATION

3 (DOLBY) DATE MOVIE

4 (DOLBY) HOSTEL

5 (DOLBY) SHE'S THE MAN

6 (DOLBY) SHAGGY DOG

7 (DOLBY) V FOR VENDETTA

8 (DOLBY) FEARLESS

9 (DOLBY) HOUSE OF FURY

10 (DOLBY) 16 BLOCKS

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2 (DOLBY) V FOR VENDETTA

3 (DOLBY) SHE'S THE MAN

4 (DOLBY) HOSTEL

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AEON FLUX
V FOR VENDETTA
TIGER BLADECinema 2000 Cinemagix
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AEON FLUXCinema 2000 Metrotown
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YOUR MINE & OURS
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BIG MOMMA'S HOUSECinema 2000 Waltermart
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HOSTEL
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HOSTEL

Mandaluyong

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3 (DOLBY) TIGER BLADE

4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

Maragana

CINEMA

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HOUSE OF FURY 5:20 / 7:25 / 9:30	YOUR MINE & OURS 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30	SHAGGY DOG 12:40 / 2:55 / 5:10 / 7:25 / 9:40	V FOR VENDETTA 1:00 / 3:40 / 6:20 / 9:00
SHE'S THE MAN 1:20 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 9:20	CASANOVA 7:30 / 9:50	DATE MOVIE 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	ONLY P120 ADMISSION GLOBE PLATINUM P240 P390

ANIMALL CINEMAS

1 V FOR VENDETTA 12:00 / 2:40 / 5:20 / 8:00	2 HOSTEL 12:15 / 2:20 / 4:25 / 6:30 / 8:35	3 THE FEARLESS 12:00 / 2:05 / 4:10 / 6:15 / 8:20
4 HOUSE OF FURY 1:00 / 3:00 / 5:00 / 7:00 / 9:00	5 SHE'S THE MAN 12:35 / 3:15 / 5:55 / 8:35	

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she loves him not.

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OPENS MARCH 22

OPENS MARCH 22
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In Pia's defense

From Jack Bernstein (Irote@verizon.net), USA
When I bumped into Pia Guanio in Las Vegas, I probably startled her. Obviously, she gets unwanted attention. Once she realized I wasn't dangerous, she posed for snapshots with me. I just can't believe she can be rude to a 12-year-old kid.

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City Tel. No: 8981-440-41

SHAGGY DOG G 1:45, 3:55, 6:05, 8:15	CASANOVA R13 12:00, 2:25	SHE'S THE MAN PG13 1:45, 3:55, 6:05, 8:15, 10:25
16 BLOCKS PG13 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50	HOSTEL R18 1:45, 3:55, 6:05, 8:15	V FOR VENDETTA R13 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:20

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INQUIRER TV GUIDE
Monday, March 20, 2006

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Wed-Thurs-Fri 10pm

ABC Ha Yayo!

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Kapamilya Cinema	WINCAA (Ran)	Pasyon de Amor	Uso Army	Mr. Bean	TNA Impact	Naruto	Outstanding	Serito	How Clean is Your House	ABC Action Movie	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Big News	Four Factor	Totoo TV	Insider	
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema	WINCAA (Ran)	Pasyon de Amor	Uso Army	Mr. Bean	TNA Impact	Naruto	Outstanding	Serito	How Clean is Your House	ABC Action Movie	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Big News	Four Factor	Totoo TV	Insider	
Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Tom & Jerry	Baby Looney Tunes	Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Tom & Jerry	Baby Looney Tunes	Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Tom & Jerry	Baby Looney Tunes	Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Tom & Jerry	Baby Looney Tunes	Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Tom & Jerry
Cinema One	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu
Cinemax	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu	Pinasas Lulu
CNN	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
CNN/Suspense	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
Discovery Channel	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
ESPN	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
ETC	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
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Fox News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
GMA 7	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
Hallmark Channel	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
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Lifestyle Network	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
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QTV	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
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SGN 21	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
Solar Sports	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
Sports Plus	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
Star Movie	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
Star World	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News
Studio 23	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News	World News

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06:10 / 08:25 LFS
08:50 LMF / 11:05 END

SHAGGY DOG
01:40 FS / 02:10 MF / 04:25
06:40 / 8:15 LFS
09:00 LMF / 10:45 END

SM MEGACINEMA

BREAKING NEWS
01:00FS / 01:30 MF
07:00 / 08:30 LFS
09:00 LMF / 10:30 END

HOUSE OF FURY

V FOR VENDETTA

RENOVATION

THE DARK

FEARLESS

FEARLESS

SHAGGY DOG

16 BLOCKS

FINAL DESTINATION 3

CASANOVA

CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY NORTH EDSA

V FOR VENDETTA

FEARLESS

SHE'S THE MAN

RESERVED

SHAGGY DOG

HOUSE OF FURY

FINAL DESTINATION 3

16 BLOCKS

SM CITY DASMARINAS

V FOR VENDETTA

CASANOVA

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

AEON FLUX

SM CITY FAIRVIEW

BREAKING NEWS

THE DARK

CLOSE TO YOU

16 BLOCKS

FINAL DESTINATION 3

FEARLESS

V FOR VENDETTA

SHAGGY DOG

SHE'S THE MAN

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

UNDERCLASS MAN

HOUSE OF FURY

SM CITY STA. MESA

V FOR VENDETTA

SHAGGY DOG

16 BLOCKS

SHE'S THE MAN

FEARLESS

THE DARK

FINAL DESTINATION 3

HOUSE OF FURY

CLOSE TO YOU

CASANOVA

SM CITY BICUTAN

V FOR VENDETTA

CASANOVA

THE DARK

16 BLOCKS

SM CITY SAN LAZARO

V FOR VENDETTA

FINAL DESTINATION 3

SHAGGY DOG

16 BLOCKS

HOUSE OF FURY

SHE'S THE MAN

SM CITY MANILA

V FOR VENDETTA

SHE'S THE MAN

UNDERCLASS MAN

FEARLESS

SHAGGY DOG

16 BLOCKS

BREAKING NEWS

HOUSE OF FURY

FINAL DESTINATION 3

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

CLOSE TO YOU

HOUSE OF FURY

SM CITY SOUTHMALL

V FOR VENDETTA

FEARLESS

SHAGGY DOG

16 BLOCKS

HOUSE OF FURY

SHE'S THE MAN

UNDERCLASS MAN

FINAL DESTINATION 3

THE DARK

RESERVED

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA

V FOR VENDETTA

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FINAL DESTINATION 3

THE DARK

SM CITY SUCAT

SHAGGY DOG

V FOR VENDETTA

16 BLOCKS

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4 SYRIANA

LUZON

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1 THE DARK

2 16 BLOCKS

3 V FOR VENDETTA

4 FINAL DESTINATION 3

5 SHAGGY DOG

6 SHE'S THE MAN

7 FEARLESS

8 CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY STA. ROSA

1 LAST HOLIDAY

2 FINAL DESTINATION 3

3 AEON FLUX

4 V FOR VENDETTA

SM CITY PAMPANGA

1 V FOR VENDETTA

2 CASANOVA

3 FINAL DESTINATION 3

4 CLOSE TO YOU

5 FEARLESS

6 16 BLOCKS

SM CITY LUCENA

1 FEARLESS

2 YOURS, MINE & OURS

3 SAW 2

4 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

SM CITY MOLINO

1 V FOR VENDETTA

2 THE DARK

3 YOURS, MINE & OURS

4 FEARLESS

SM CITY CEBU

1 V FOR VENDETTA
11:15FS / 11:30 MF
02:00 / 04:30
07:00 / 09:15 LFS
09:30 LMF / 11:45 END

2 RESERVED

3 NEW WORLD
11:15FS / 11:30 MF
02:00 / 04:30
07:00 / 09:15 LFS
09:30 LMF / 11:45 END

4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2

5 GOAL

6 16 BLOCKS

7 CLOSE TO YOU

8 FEARLESS

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO

1 CASANOVA

2 RESERVED

3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

4 FEARLESS

5 V FOR VENDETTA

6 UNDERCLASS MAN

7 RESERVED

8 16 BLOCKS

SM CITY DAVAO

1 V FOR VENDETTA

2 FEARLESS

3 FIREWALL

4 FINAL DESTINATION 3

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2 V FOR VENDETTA 11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00	7 DATE MOVIE 1:20 3:25 5:30 7:35 9:45
3 HOUSE OF FURY 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00	8 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00
4 SHAGGY DOG 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50	9 16 BLOCKS 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
5 HOSTEL 11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50	10 THE DARK 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

1 V FOR VENDETTA 10:10 12:35 3:40 6:40 9:50	5 HOSTEL 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
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1 SHAGGY DOG	4 HOSTEL
2 V FOR VENDETTA	5 HOUSE OF FURY
3 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN	

1 FEARLESS	1 V FOR VENDETTA
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A2-4

An A for B movies

From page A2-1

featured local stars Bernard Bonnin, Charlie Davao, Paquito Diaz and Sofia Moran, and was produced by Santiago.

Homegrown actors Vic Diaz, Subas Her-rero and Marissa Del-gado were cast in Hill's "The Big Bird Cage" in 1972. Also in 1972, Romero worked as director on "Black Mama, White Mama," where Diaz, Dindo Fernando, Alona Alegre, Lotis Key and Eddie Garcia played pivotal roles.

All these movies starred Pam Grier, the acknowledged queen of "black exploita-tion" and "women-in-prison" flicks.

Romero recalls: "I heard that Quentin Tarantino cast Pam as lead in Jackie Brown" because he saw "Black Mama" as a kid."

Hawkins disagrees with critics who dis-miss such flicks as non-mainstream fare.

"These films were not on the margins," Hawkins tells INQUIR-ER Entertainment. "Black Mama" made millions of dollars in New York where it was shown in 87 the-aters. To me, they're not bad movies. They're entertaining and exciting. They're high-concept films made on low bud-gets."

Among female prison flicks, his fa-vorite is "Big Bird Cage," he says, be-cause "it's out-ra-geous, silly and fun."

He also likes Tony Falcon and Pinoy cowboy movies.

A major challenge he has encountered in his research work in the country is the lack of available copies of Pinoy secret agent and Western movies.

"There isn't an in-tegrated film archive system here," he says. "The movies I'm in-terested in are not considered great her-itage films worthy of preservation."

These so-called commercial flicks, however, should also be saved because, as "cultural products," they were made dur-ing (and reflected) a tumultuous time in Philippine history.

In these movies, certain "subversive" elements seeped through, blurring the lines between fact and fiction—for ex-ample, allusions to the Plaza Miranda bombing and B-movie actress Dovie Beams' adulterous af-fair with martial law President Ferdinand Marcos in "Big Bird Cage."

"It was revealed and obscured at the same time," Hawkins says of the political subtext in these movies. "Ironically, at a time when Marcos was trying to sup-press a revolution in the Philippines, these movies were valoriz-ing revolutionaries as heroes . . . I asked Cirio Santiago about it and he admitted that, when he read the script [of "Big Bird Cage"], his initial re-action was: 'There's no way we could get away with it!'"

But they did.

"The Marcos gov-ernment didn't care," Hawkins says. "It's fascinating how they found a way to tell the story of the Philippines in an indi-rect way."

Brownman mall tour

BROWMAN REVIVAL is currently touring Robinson's Malls to promote their new album, "Steady Lang," from BMG Records Pilipinas. First stop was Robinsons Place Metro East on March 3, followed by Santa Rosa on March 5, then Galleria on March 17. Forthcoming schedules include Robinsons Place Manila on March 30 and Novaliches on April 2. Shows start at 5 p.m.

'Band Explosion'

"Band Explosion" happens March 24, 8:30 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum. Featured groups are Orange and Lemons, Cueshe, Spongecola, Brownman Revival, Kitchie Nadal will also perform. Call 911-5555.

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 Suzy Unas at Manila Pavilion's Boulvar Lounge
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Freeverse at Tavern on the Square
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 Aretha and Souled Out at Merk's
 Troy Montero at Bagaberde Roxas Boulevard U-Turn at Bagaberde Pasig
 Margarita at Manila Pavilion's Boulvar Lounge
 Ministix at Metro Phi Bar, Metrowalk Complex

March 22

Ntwine at Tavern on the Square
 Moonstruck at RJ Guitar Bar

Jacquel Magno at Merk's
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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 DATE MOVIE	2 HOSTEL	3 V FOR VENDETTA	7 SHAGGY DOG
GB1 GREENBELT 1	16 BLOCKS	2 V FOR VENDETTA		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 SHE'S THE MAN	2 V FOR VENDETTA		
	3 16 BLOCKS	4 DATE MOVIE	5 HOSTEL	
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ENTERTAINMENT

ROUNDUP

Glory days and drama

YESTERDAY



FROM glamour gal to golden grandma: "My goal is to be of service."

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Rudy Esperas
Additional photos courtesy of Gloria Sevilla and the Mowelfund Film Institute

IT'S A LONG STORY," she cautions the listener, but proceeds to tell it, anyway.

Gloria Sevilla, Queen of Cebuano cinema, is recounting the glory days, when Visayan films competed with Tagalog hits not only for audience adulation but for Famas trophies.

A Cebuano film, "Badlis sa Kinabuhì (Destiny)," almost romped away with Famas Best Picture in 1970. In fact, Gloria won Best Actress for that movie, which she produced with first husband Mat Ranillo Jr. under their own MG Films.

That was the second of her three Famas statuettes. She won Best Supporting Actress for "Madugong Paghihiganti" in 1963 and again Best Actress for "Gimingaw Ako (I Miss You)" in 1974.

More significantly, "Badlis" was shown in the Berlin International Film Festival and "Gimingaw" in the Moscow International Film Festival—both in the non-competition category.

Gloria, who describes herself as an awkward and gangly teenager, has surely gone a long way from Cebu.

Meeting Mat

For good and ill, her sun-kissed and exotic looks helped her catch people's attention.

"I was so thin and dark, my classmates called me *tikling*, after the bird," Gloria recalls. "But in one declamation contest that I won, Danilo Nuñez—talent scout, actor and my Papa's kum-pate—happened to be in the audience."

It was Danilo, a *kontrabida* in Cebuano flicks who later became Gloria's co-star in many movies (including "Badlis"), who asked Bonifacio Sevilla, the 14-year-old's father, to allow her to join the movies.

For good measure, Danilo dragged along her future co-star and husband, Mat.

"I wanted it so bad that, before

Gloria Sevilla wasn't just the Queen of Cebuano cinema, she was also a pioneering producer who championed Visayan films



IN THE 1960s, with Mat Jr.

I faced them, I wore my mom's bra and stuffed it with rags because I was flat-chested," she chortles. "Mat was my crush!"

Sufficiently motivated, Gloria bested 60 other aspirants in the audition and bagged the lead role opposite Mat in "Princesa Tirana," produced by Concordia Arong of Azucena Pictures.

A string of hits followed, like "Leonora," "Pailub Lang (Be Humble)" and "Gloria Akong Anak."

Before long, Manila beckoned. One of the Santiago brothers (of Premiere) was in Cebu and noticed the long lines to one of Gloria's movies. Turned out, the theater checker was Gloria's father. Soon enough, before her dad could even finish asking her, 17-year-old Gloria was packing her bags for Manila.

Her first movie for Premiere was National Artist Gerry de Leon's "Banga ni Zimadar," top-billed by Efren Reyes, Johnny Montero, Edna Luna and Carol Varga.

"I was given so much importance in the billing," she beams. "I had one frame all to myself and it said: 'And introducing to the Tagalog audience, the Queen of Visayan movies, Gloria Sevilla!'"

A year later, she was promoted to lead role in another De Leon masterpiece, "Ifugao"—which went down in history not only for giving Efren Reyes the Best Actor prize in the second Asian Film Festival in 1955, but also for showcasing the first frontal nude scene, with the dauntless Gloria, of course.

"But since I wasn't that busty, the film's makeup artists Toti Evangelista and Tony Artiaga made prosthetic breasts for me," she remembers. "Every time they pulled the fake boobs off my chest, I cried out in pain. It was as if they used Mighty Bond!"

Gloria's work in Premiere and with Manong Gerry had undoubtedly taught her to put a premium on quality when she started producing her own movies.

Proof: Two Visayan films under her supervision were sent to Eu-



IN THE 1990s, with Amado

rope.

"Badlis" was shown in the Informative division in Berlin in 1970," she recounts. "The Philippine government dispatched a female consul as my chaperone and gave me P5,000 as clothing allowance."

Gloria brought three suitcases filled with *ternos*, Southern Philippine and other native costumes by designer Rudy Fuentes.

"We even brought *sampaguita* and Vanda orchids that were kept in a freezer on the plane," she recalls.

Showstopper

In Berlin, she was a showstopper. She made certain of this by arriving late on the opening night of "Badlis" and making a grand entrance down a spiral staircase.

"The next day I landed on the front pages of German newspapers," she chuckles.

Two years later, she again made heads turn in Moscow, where "Gimingaw," directed by second husband Amado Cortez, was screened.

"At first, I wanted to walk out because the Philippine flag wasn't displayed," she says. Always a fighter, Gloria eventually convinced the organizers to show off the Philippine colors.

During the closing ceremony at the Kremlin, Gloria's *terno* and Amado's *barong* elicited admiring glances from fellow delegates—including Chilean First Lady Hortensia Bussi Soto, wife of Salvador Allende.

"She complimented my *terno* which was made of *hablon* and studded with crystals," Gloria reminisces. "She kept telling me that I was gorgeous. I guess it was her

first time to see someone ugly!"

True drama

Gloria's healthy sense of humor has saved her from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune on more than one occasion. Her life was just as dramatic as the tearjerkers she starred in.

Mat died in a plane crash in 1969, making her a widow with five kids, and eight months pregnant at that.

In the 1980s, she migrated to the United States with second husband Amado and made ends meet by selling kitchenware. In her spare time, she joined the Nino Aquino Movement and the street demonstrations against the Marcoses in the US.

Post-Edsa, Gloria stayed in the sidelines. President Corazon Aquino appointed Amado as consul in San Francisco, a post he held until 1992.

Two years later, President Joseph Estrada made Amado ambassador to 11 Pacific states in the US, in which capacity he served until a year before his passing in 2003.

Gloria herself has been appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo as Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) board member. "We visited Melbourne, Australia," she reports. "We observed in vocational schools. Every now and then, we also go to the Visayas and Mindanao to conduct seminars for Tesda."

Seems show biz has been shelved for this

mother of seven and grandmother of 12.

"I'm also active in Rivers of the Living Water, a Catholic organization," she says. "I also host a radio show, 'Inday sa Balitaw,' on DZRB, every Saturday, from 4 to 5 p.m."

She made a TV comeback recently on QTV 11's Friday night sitcom "Gandang Lola Ko"—with Bella Flores and Ba-

by O'Brien. Daughter Suzette Ranillo directed her and Nora Aunor on "Care Home," a TV drama special on Filipino caregivers abroad.

Last Saturday, "Badlis" was shown at the "Aktres: Pelikula at Lipunan" film festival mounted by Mowelfund at the Gateway Mall.

Even in her golden years, unstoppable and indefatigable Gloria is stacking a full plate in front of her.

"For the love of..." she asserts. "I want to continue to help in my own little way. When you grow old, your only goal in life is to be of service."

Offensive hairdo

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO—An Indian family sued the producers of Steven Spielberg's television miniseries, "Into the West," claiming a set stylist cut their 8-year-old daughter's hair without regard for tribal customs.

"Just because you're wealthy, you don't do something without checking first," the girl's father, Danny Ponce, said Friday. The family is Mescalero Apache.

Ponce filed suit in federal court on March 6, naming Turner Films Inc. and an unidentified stylist as defendants. The lawsuit seeks \$250,000 for emotional distress and \$75,000 in damages.

A Turner Films spokesperson said the company doesn't comment on pending litigation. AP

Nick L sitcom

LOS ANGELES—Nick Lachey could be looking at another steady TV gig.

Heading toward single status in real life as his divorce from Jessica Simpson nears completion, he'll play a bachelor in a sitcom pilot for the new CW network.

He'll star as Colin, a single man living in Manhattan, in the comedy "She Said/He Said," CW spokesperson Paul McGuire said Friday.

Other cast members are still being hired for the pilot that will shoot in April, McGuire said. AP

Back to work

LOS ANGELES—Maternity leave is over for Oscar winner Julia Roberts, who is planning her return to the silver screen, Hollywood trade magazine Variety reported Friday.

Roberts, 39, began her maternity leave in early 2005 to take care of her twin children.

The famous "Pretty Woman" is now in final talks to star in a movie titled "Daniel Isn't Talking," based on a novel by Marti Leimbach.



ROBERTS

The movie, about the challenges of a family that raises an autistic child, is to be produced by Karen Rosenfelt with a script by Stephen Chbosky ("Rent").

Roberts has already starred in a movie based on a Leimbach book, "Dying Young" (1991). AFP

Not for good

LOS ANGELES—Michael Jackson has shuttered his Neverland Valley Ranch home and laid off staff, but contrary to media reports the pop star has not shut down the estate for good, his spokesperson said on Friday.

Jackson's plans for the sprawling central California ranch have been in question since March 9, when state officials fined the singer \$69,000 and effectively closed the estate because he allowed his workers compensation insurance to lapse.

The 47-year-old entertainer was also fined an estimated \$100,000 for failing to issue paychecks to Neverland's workers for four months, but dodged legal action this week by paying employees hundreds of thousands of dollars in back wages. Reuters

Getting married

LOS ANGELES—"Desperate Housewives" actress Nicollette Sheridan and singer Michael Bolton are engaged, Sheridan's publicist confirmed.

Sheridan, 42, and Bolton, 53, dated for several years in the 1990s and rekindled their romance last year.

Sheridan was married to actor Harry Hamlin from 1991 to 1993. Bolton ended his 15-year marriage to Maureen McGuire, with whom he has three daughters, in 1990. AP

Siu Bang

WILLIAM Hung, "American Idol" rejected-turned-pop star and TV celebrity, has added "movie star" to his resumé with "Where's Mama's Boy," his first feature film.

In the movie, showing on March 28, 12:05 p.m. on Star Chinese Movies, Hung plays a good-natured village kid in ancient China who sells pancakes to pay for his mother's medical expenses.



Signed up

VIVA Entertainment has signed up three finalists of the recently concluded "Search for a Star in a Million" on ABS-CBN.

The new Viva recording artists—shown in photo with Veronique del Rosario, managing director of Viva Artists Agency—are, from left, Jay Perillo, Jimmy Marquez and Vito Bello.

Now on disc

"TIM BURTON'S Corpse Bride" and "Must Love Dogs" are now available on DVD and VCD (in wide screen and full screen formats) from Warner Home Video.

"Bride" on DVD contains behind-the-scenes footage and animation featurettes; "Dogs" has additional scenes.



POSTERS of Gloria's biggest hits in Cebu

THE CEBUANA charmer at age 14



IN "Palad Ta ang Nagbuot," with Gabriel "Flash" Elorde and Rebecca Gonzales

BY BILLAMEND A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

FOXTROT

ANG DAMI MO NANG KAAWAY

YUNG LEFT, RIGHT AT CENTER

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MEDYO PA LANG YUN?!

MARVIN

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BY TOM ARMSTRONG

BY RM. JUNIOR

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM... MOM AND DAD THREATENING YOU WITH THE POTTY CHAIR AGAIN?

MOM ARRANGED A PLAYDATE FOR ME WITH CAILIN FROM PRESCHOOL

SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?

I'M NOT SURE I'M READY TO GET INVOLVED IN A SERIOUS RELATIONSHIP

ANO BA 'YANG PINAGKAKAABALAHAN MO NGAYON AT HINDI BARBELL 'YANG BITBIT MO?

SALOOBIN TUNGKOL SA ANO?

DI BA SA PAGISING INA E 'NIRE MO LANG PALABAS SI PALTIK TAPOS IPINA UBAYA MO NA SA 'KIN ANG LAHAT?

SA PAGISING MAYBAHAY NAMAN E NAA- ACCOMPLISH MO ANG MGA GAWAIN NA BUNGANGA MO LANG ANG GUMAGALAW...

UMALIS KA NGA DYAN AT BAKA SIPAIN KITA SA BLOG.

BABY BLUES

MUTTS

BY JERRY SCOTT

BY PATRICK McDONNELL

ZOE, DON'T TIP BACK IN YOUR CHAIR. YOU MIGHT FALL.

ZOE, DON'T TIP BACK IN YOUR CHAIR. YOU MIGHT FALL.

ZOE, DON'T TIP BACK IN YOUR CHAIR. YOU MIGHT FALL.

CRASH!

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU? ONCE MORE WOULD HAVE BEEN GOOD.

...AND NOW A SONG FOR SPRING!

I PRACTICED ALL WINTER.

ATOMO AND WEBBOY

DIVINE COMEDY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

BY STEVEN PABALINAS

YOU CAN'T QUIT! OUR JOURNEY TO LIFE HAS JUST BEGUN!

THINK OF ALL THE EXPERIENCES AND MEMORIES YOU'LL MISS OUT ON IF YOU QUIT NOW!

TELL YOU WHAT. IF TODAY'S TRIP IS BORING YOU I PROMISE TOMORROW WILL BE EXCITING.

IF NOT TOMORROW, MAYBE THE DAY AFTER THAT OR THE NEXT. BEST BET WILL BE NEXT WEEK.

LORD, WHAT IS MY PURPOSE IN LIFE?

AN AMOEBA CONTEMPLATING THE MYSTERY OF LIFE

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a logical, analytical mind. Your sensitivity is not always apparent, but it's there. Most of you are talented in several fields. At times, you're a dreamy idealist, but your feet are always on the ground. You value friendship. Everyone knows you're a romantic. Prepare to work hard this year for success in the following year.

Birthdate of: Spike Lee, director/writer; William Hurt, actor; Holly Hunter, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today the Sun moves into your sign. Happy birthday! It's your turn to recharge your batteries for the rest of the year. Put yourself first now.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your popularity rating definitely increases now! Everyone wants to see your face. Accept all invitations. Enjoy good times with others.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You have an increasing desire to travel now. You want more out of life. You want to see more of the world! And you want to learn more too.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You need rest and relaxation. You have a lot to think about. As your year comes to an end, you have to ponder it, and wonder what you want for the year ahead.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): The Sun is now at high noon in your chart. This acts like a spotlight on you. Everyone notices you, especially VIPs and important people. Milk this for all it's worth.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You feel quite intensely about things now and for the next few weeks. You won't get to the bottom of something. You will not settle for superficial explanations.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The Sun is now as far away from your sign as it will get all year. Because of this, you might feel tired. (The Sun gives us energy.) Partnerships will be a strong focus now.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You have a lot of energy now to get organized. You're working hard to improve your life both at work and at home. Great! Make hay while the sun shines!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): The next few weeks are a lovely, playful, flirtatious time for you. Accept invitations to parties; get out and schmooze with friends.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Now is the time to swing your focus to home, family and domestic matters. Parents assume a greater role in your life. You want to solidify your home base.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You have a busy month ahead. Errands, short trips, conversations with others, increased time with siblings plus wheeling and dealing keep your dance card full!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): In the next few weeks, you're giving a lot of thought to money, possessions and what it is you really want in life. First you have to figure out what makes you happy.

ANG KULIT MO A! HINDI NGA AKO INSDMIAC! PAANO MO BA NASABI YAN?

E IKAW LANG ANG TUMATAWAG NG GANITONG ALAS TRES NG UMASA!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

DOWN

1 Saxon

6 Brewery supply

10 City near Phoenix

14 Matthew's love in "Grumpier Old Men"

15 Eye part

21 Bird crop

22 All-seeing one

23 Headache remedy

25 Persian word?

26 Annoy

28 Cut corners

32 James of "Boston Legal"

35 Musician's asset

37 Olds creation

38 Pour it on

42 Brynner of "Westworld"

43 In addition

44 Full of spirit

45 Sad piece

48 Overthrows

50 Chimed

52 Now hold on!

56 Esoteric

59 Shuttle grp.

60 Cover

61 Pour it on

64 School on the Thames

65 Eat fancily

66 Irregularly worn

67 Studio structures

68 Words from a pro?

69 Was deserving

9 Western resort lake

10 Schenectady's river

11 Larger-than-life

12 Move merchandise

13 Pony up

18 Neighbor of Djibouti

19 Aphrodite's child

24 Of India: pref.

25 Small-minded

27 West Yorkshire city

29 Spring bloom

30 Hook up

31 Floral arrangement

32 Eyelid woe

33 The Beatles bassist

34 Rod in a rod

36 Invigorate

39 Comfy

40 Habitual criminal

41 Dorothy or Lillian

46 Cereals

47 Sudden pull

49 Applications

51 Impoverished

53 "The Naming of Cats" poet

54 Shampooing stop

55 Skidded

56 Becomes mellow

57 Mechanical learning

58 Coagulate

59 1492 caravel

62 Fabrication

63 FDR's Blue Eagle

LOVEKNOTS

TULDOK

YUN DAW NORTHRAL PROJECT NA FUNDED BY CHINA "SUFFERED HITCHES IN THE LAST FOUR MONTHS..."

YAN NA NGA ANG SINASABI KO!!! MAGKAKA-PROBLEMA TALAGA SILA KUNG SA UMPISA NG PROJECT...

HINDI SILA NAGPA-FENG SHUI!!!

MAGPIT ANG NAGING BUHAY MO!!!

Magbabago ang inyong daigdig!

Gagawin ni Sabina ang lahat,
Susuungin ang panganib at kamatayan
Masundan lang sa kaharian ng Salamangka
Ang pamilyang kinuha sa kanya
Noong siya'y musmos pa lamang.

Sa kanyang pakikipagsapalaran,
Makikilala niya sa mahiwagang daigdig si Argo...
Ang Salamangkang magmamahal at magtuturo
Sa kanya ng...



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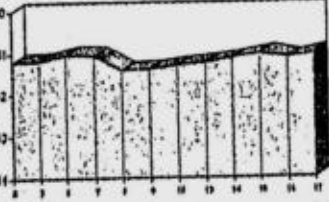
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INDICATORS CURRENCIES



MARCH

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As of 5 p.m., March 17, 2006

Y 116.68 = \$1
As of 5 p.m., March 17, 2006

GOLD: \$551.10-551.60
per ounce Hong Kong, March 16, 2006

Slow week ahead

STOCKS MAY SUCCEED TO SOME PROFIT-taking this week, some analysts said, following the run-up that marked last week's trading. AB Capital Securities said that since the market has moved up in the last six sessions, there may be some room for technical correction. "The technical indicators are giving a mixed

SLOW/B13

TECH TOOLS FOR SMES

A new business technology center has been set for small and medium enterprises, allowing them access to business and technology expertise. On hand at the opening are Carissa P. Cruz of the trade department and Virgilio Peña of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (seated). Looking on are Antonio Javier of Microsoft Philippines, and Ricly Banaag of Intel Philippines.



By Doris C. Dumlaog

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, hoping to borrow more from the domestic market, has secured the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to increase its long-term peso bond float by as much as P100 billion.

The BSP's policy-making Monetary Board gave the state a standby authority to issue P100 billion more in fresh Treasury bonds during its meeting last Thursday.

The next day, the Development Budget Coordination Committee agreed to revise the government's borrowing mix to favor more domestic issuances, government sources said.

A member of the DBCC's executive technical board said the inter-agency council on Friday agreed to further amend the government's borrowing mix in favor of domestic financing.

For every P1 worth of financing requirement, GOVT/B11

BSP issues tougher set of guidelines for 'problem' banks

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS is getting tougher on problem banks by plotting a stricter framework that will require these institutions to undertake "prompt corrective action" at the first sign of weakness.

The BSP's policy-making Monetary Board recently approved the stiffer set of guidelines that will zero in on the weakest in the banking system and force these institutions to undertake remedial measures once they fall below the standards set.

"This is so that the problems would not worsen," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters. "At an early stage, a bank should already take steps to strengthen its financial position. "These steps will be contained in a


plan of action which will be in a memorandum of agreement that will be signed by the bank's board of directors and BSP"

Tetangco said the new PCA framework BIR/B11

WHAT'S INSIDE

Tessie's counter-gambit /B3

ING expects peso to further appreciate to 45:\$1 /B6



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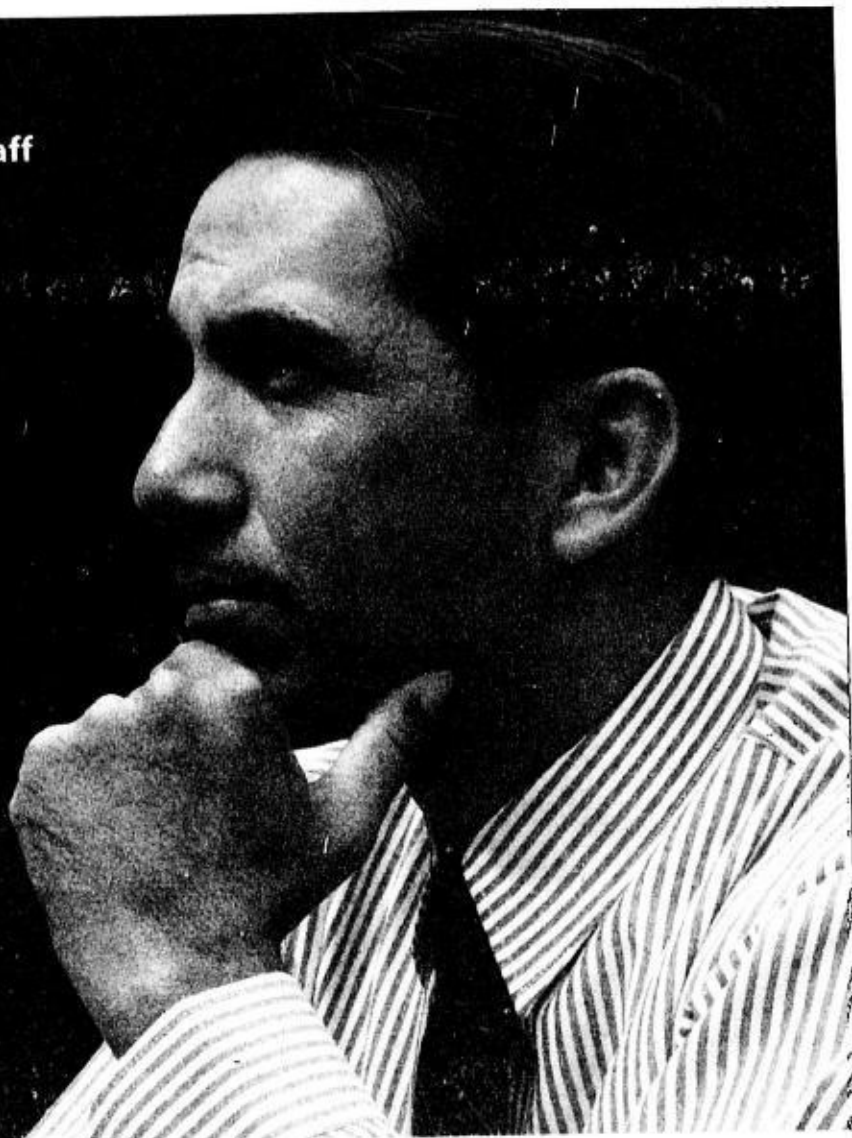
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Motorcycle firms push for standards

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MOTORCYCLE MANUFACTURERS are pushing for the standardization of global regulations related to the industry due to growing sales, particularly in Asia and the Philippines.

Data from the Singapore-based Federation of Asian Motorcycle Industries showed that bike sales in the region were up 18.6 percent to about 16.8 million units in 2005 from about 14.2 million in the previous year.

Philippine turnover outpaced that of the region with an increase of 20.3 percent to some 493,000 units last year from about 410,000 in 2004. Regional sales accounted for about 92 percent of some 18.4 million units pro-

duced by all eight members of FAMI last year.

FAMI groups national organizations Asosiasi Industri Sepeda Motor Indonesia, Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association, Motorcycle and Scooter Assemblers and Distributors Association of Malaysia, Motorcycle Development Program Participants Association of the Philippines, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers, Singapore Motor Cycle Trade Association, Thai Automotive Industry Association, and Taiwan Transportation Vehicle Manufacturers.

FAMI leaders gathered in Makati City last Saturday for their annual meeting as well as to cement an agreement with counterparts in the International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association to join the Geneva-based global group.

Mohammed Aidid, FAMI president, said in a briefing that his group's decision to join IMMA meant that FAMI had accepted a bigger role in the development of the world industry.

Mohammed said the industry was generally growing worldwide and that its major concerns were road safety and environmental protection.

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Tessie's counter-gambit

AMID RELENTLESS BOARDROOM MANEUVERINGS and media snipings, an exasperated Teresita Sy has indicated that she is all but ready to agree to Winston Garcia's proposal and join GSIS, and possibly SSS, in selling the Sy group's stake in Equitable PCIBank.

PLDT's Manuel V. Pangilinan, in the meantime, denied that he and his First Pacific Group ever expressed interest in taking control of Equitable PCIBank.

"We are not in any discussion with any of the shareholders of the bank—not one or more of the SSS, GSIS or the Sy family—in respect of acquiring their stake," MVP said.

MVP, who was reached in Hong Kong on Saturday, said he also sent the same texted reply to the SM heiress and to Corazon de la Paz, president of the Social Security System and Equitable PCIBank chair.

MVP's name and that of the First Pacific Group cropped up after MVP, a former banker himself, had been noted asking key Equitable PCIBank stakeholders

"discreet questions" about the bank's conditions.

Sy, in the meantime, gave Garcia two weeks, or up to the end of the month, to produce a written binding offer for the SM/Banco de Oro's estimated 34 percent stake in Equitable PCIBank.

Sy's terms: Cash, and no due diligence.

Should Garcia's mystery buyer agree to Sy's terms, the mall queen would have, in just a year, doubled her initial investment in the disputed bank to salve her bruised ego and thwarted ambition.

As of mid-2005, Equitable PCIBank had slightly over 727 million outstanding shares; at P95 each, the Sy block would already be worth nearly P23.5 billion.

Throwing in the 12 percent of the Government Service Insurance System and the adjusted 25 percent of the SSS, the entire deal could be worth more than P49 billion, not counting the additional P20 billion that Garcia's mystery buyer would have to provide

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

for the mandatory tender offer for the rest of Equitable PCIBank's minority shareholders.

(Garcia, however, claims the cash needed for mandatory tender offer for the minority stake should not be over P6 billion, since seven percent of the balance, held by the family of bank vice chair Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, is still sequestered, while 10 percent is being held by the bank in disputed treasury shares.)

One senior banker, commenting on the scale of the continuing boardroom saga, said: "For a moment, I thought he (Winston) was bluffing, but things seem to be turning his way. Asking price is way out, but someone out there may be

drunk enough to throw money at it even at that outrageous price."

Mike boys' cash cow

THE MESTIZO relatives of Mike Arroyo, now lordling it over cash-rich Philcomsat Holdings Corp., have asked for another indefinite postponement of the publicly listed company.

The octogenarian head of PHC, Manuel Nieto, has written the Securities and Exchange Commission to reconsider its order directing the contested corporation to hold the already much delayed election, its first since August 2004.

With the SEC and the Supreme Court's decisions, it is only a matter of time before Nieto, his nephew and Mike Arroyo cousin Benito Araneta and fellow Malacañang nominee, Free Press publisher Enrique "Henry" Locsin, lose control of POTC because of their reduced PCGG shareholdings.

Despite being hardly traded, POTC sits on over P1.2 billion in cash it inherited during the Estrada years. POTC cor-

porate secretary Louie Lokin at that time admitted that the bulk of the cash had been deposited at Bank Wise, the troubled savings bank that has transferred ownership from Erap cronies to Mike Arroyo allies.

Araneta was lately seen meeting with top Bank Wise officials at the Makati-Shangri-la, amid a request from Philippine Veterans Bank for the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. to extend P3 billion in assistance in exchange for PVB being asked to help the troubled thrift bank.

Heard through the grapevine

A GROUP of ticked-off La Salle alumni and donors met with Bro. Armin Luistro, last week to express their displeasure over the religious official being part of the "hakot-padasal" brigade and using the school facilities for the oust-GMA campaign. The meeting was held in the Phinma penthouse office of former Finance Secretary Ramon del Rosario Jr.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@piddst.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

LG Named Global No. 1 Air Conditioner

For six consecutive years since 2000, LG Electronics' air-conditioner was proclaimed GLOBAL No. 1 by the Japan Air-Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration News (JARN). In the banner story of its latest newsletter publication released worldwide to over 300 countries, LG Electronics remained on top of its competitors by posting a high 45% difference in global sales over its nearest competitor.

LG Electronics' air-conditioner has also posted 10 million units sales for two consecutive years since 2004.

2000-2005
Global No. 1

Local Recognitions and Awards

Similarly, LG Electronics Philippines received two distinguished commendations and awards from the Consumer Group Philippines and the Union of Consumer Watch in October and November, 2005 respectively.

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5 - o n - 5

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More Innovations from LGE

In late October 2005, LGE unveiled its new MPS environment-friendly inverter system, the "Multi-V Plus" and "eco V". The environment-friendly MPS (Multi-Power System) inverter system, the first of its kind in the Philippines, uses environment-friendly refrigerant "R-410A" which does not destroy or harm the ozone layer. The relevant market for the new product is rapidly increasing in accordance with Indoor Air Quality management laws that took effect in early January 2006, and the implementation of the Housing Performance Grade Marking System.

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Life's Good

Scorecard on jobs, prices

AS I LIKE TO TELL MY AUDIENCES, the three main things the common Filipino cares about regarding the economy are prices, jobs and income, in that order, according to popular surveys.

Data on prices are available every month, with a time lag of five days. Data on jobs and income (as

measured by output or GDP) come only once every quarter, and with a time lag of about two months.

The jobs data for the January 2006 labor and employment survey just came out last week. The latest data on prices and inflation came out earlier this month, while

No FREE LUNCH



Cielito F. Habito

current GDP data won't be available for another two months. Thus I'll have to leave out output and income from this scorecard for now.

So what's the latest score on these basic indicators on the economy?

Jobs picture mixed

Latest data show either a worsening or a slight improvement in the overall jobs situation, depending on your point of reference.

Using the government's new definition of unemployment, the January unemployment rate of 8.1 percent is worse than the 7.4 percent reported in October 2005.

To compare with the year-ago figure, we need to use the old definition, which would show an improvement from 11.3 percent in January 2005 to 10.7 percent in January 2006.

It's probably easier to appreciate the statistics if we look at the numbers of the jobs themselves. The same report says that 750,000 new jobs were generated in the past year, i.e. between January 2005 and January 2006.

This is not good news, if you consider how this falls far short of the one million new job-seekers who join the labor force every year. It is for this reason that the government has been targeting six to 10 million new jobs in the 2005-2010 period of the current Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP).

Low job quality

There are more challenges. The underemployment rate—or the proportion of the employed workers whose jobs are inadequate—has risen further to 21.3 percent, higher than last October (21.2 percent), and much higher than last year (16.1 percent).

This can only mean that the jobs generated in the past year fell short not only in quantity, but also in quality. There is further evidence of this. Of the 750,000 new jobs created, more than half (389,000) were in the form of unpaid family workers, the bulk of it in agriculture (314,000).

The other big portion of new jobs (263,000) came from the self-employed, most of it likely to be in the informal sector or the so-called "underground economy." Only

98,000 jobs that pay wages or salaries were created, a mere 13 percent of the new jobs.

Note that about half (16.2 million or 50.1 percent) of our currently employed workers are wage and salary workers. If these types of workers are now only increasing by the tens of thousands, while the informally employed are increasing by the hundreds of thousands, the share of those in more formal employment must be deteriorating.

Furthermore, over one-third (12 million out of a total 32 million) of the workers were in part-time jobs, that is, worked less than 40 hours a week or 8 hours a day. And over one third of these part-timers (4.4 million) worked less than half-time. In short, we don't only need to create more jobs, we need to create better jobs as well.

Wrong move

Across the regions, Metro Manila stands out as having the highest unemployment rate (15 percent), almost twice the national average. Also exceeding the national average are Calabarzon with 10.2 percent, Central Luzon with 9.7 percent, and Ilocos with 9.1 percent.

On the other hand, the lowest unemployment rates were posted in Cagayan Valley (3.2 percent), ARMM (3.3 percent), and the Zamboanga Peninsula (3.7 percent).

All this only goes to show that people from far-flung regions who keep flocking to Metro Manila and its surrounding provinces hoping to find a better life are probably doing the wrong thing. They are likely to end up jobless and in worse poverty—not to mention worse health and security from the pollution and criminality they will have to contend with.

Prices picking up

The inflation rate jumped up from 6.7 percent in January to 7.6 percent in February, a result being attributed to the imposition of the 2 percentage point hike in the VAT rate.

But a closer examination would indicate that there must be more to it than the higher VAT, as prices of food, which is mostly VAT-exempt, accelerated by almost as much as non-food prices did.

Whatever it was, price increases have been speeding up since 2003, when the inflation rate had held steady at about 3 percent for two years, but picked up to 5.5 percent in 2004, and on to 7.6 last year.

The price outlook remains somewhat hazy, as much of it depends on factors beyond our control, especially world oil prices which have been rather volatile lately. On the other hand, the strengthening of the peso has been a positive influence on prices.

But don't jump for joy on this: it comes at the cost of more fundamental challenges to the jobs, livelihoods and purchasing power of millions of Filipinos in the export sectors, domestic manufacturing, and OFW families. Yet another manifestation of that age-old economic maxim: you can't have a free lunch. (Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu.)

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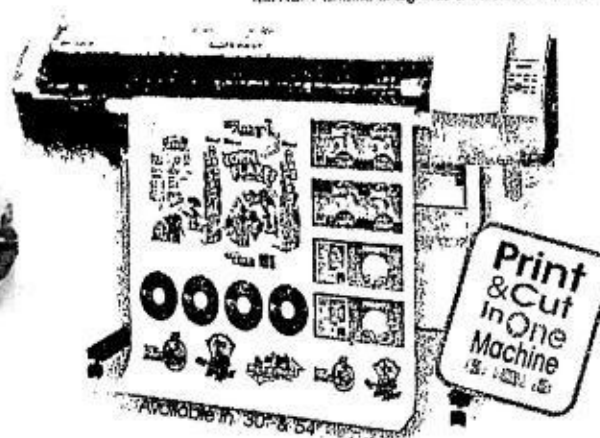


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Hotel gets incentives

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE GOKONGWEI GROUP HAS SECURED tax perks and other incentives for its P1.5-billion Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila Hotel at the Ortigas Center.

Data from the Board of Investments showed that Robinsons Land Corp.'s project was the biggest in terms of cost among the projects approved under the agency's simplified registration process between Jan. 1 and March 10.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez said that under the 2005 Investments Priorities Plan, investments related to tourism were a priority considering that there are not enough rooms available for foreign visitors.

He also said the project was given pioneer status because of the huge project cost.

"The IPP guidelines for the tourism sector provides that hotel projects that would spend at least \$100,000 (about P5.3 million at the time of RBL's filing of application last year) a room or more are entitled to full incentives," Hernandez said.

With 265 rooms, Crowne Plaza exceeded the hurdle at P5.68 million for each room.

The project is expected to start full operation in October and will create 115 new jobs.

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Alexander Yu, ME 4
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Julie Alegrado, ME1
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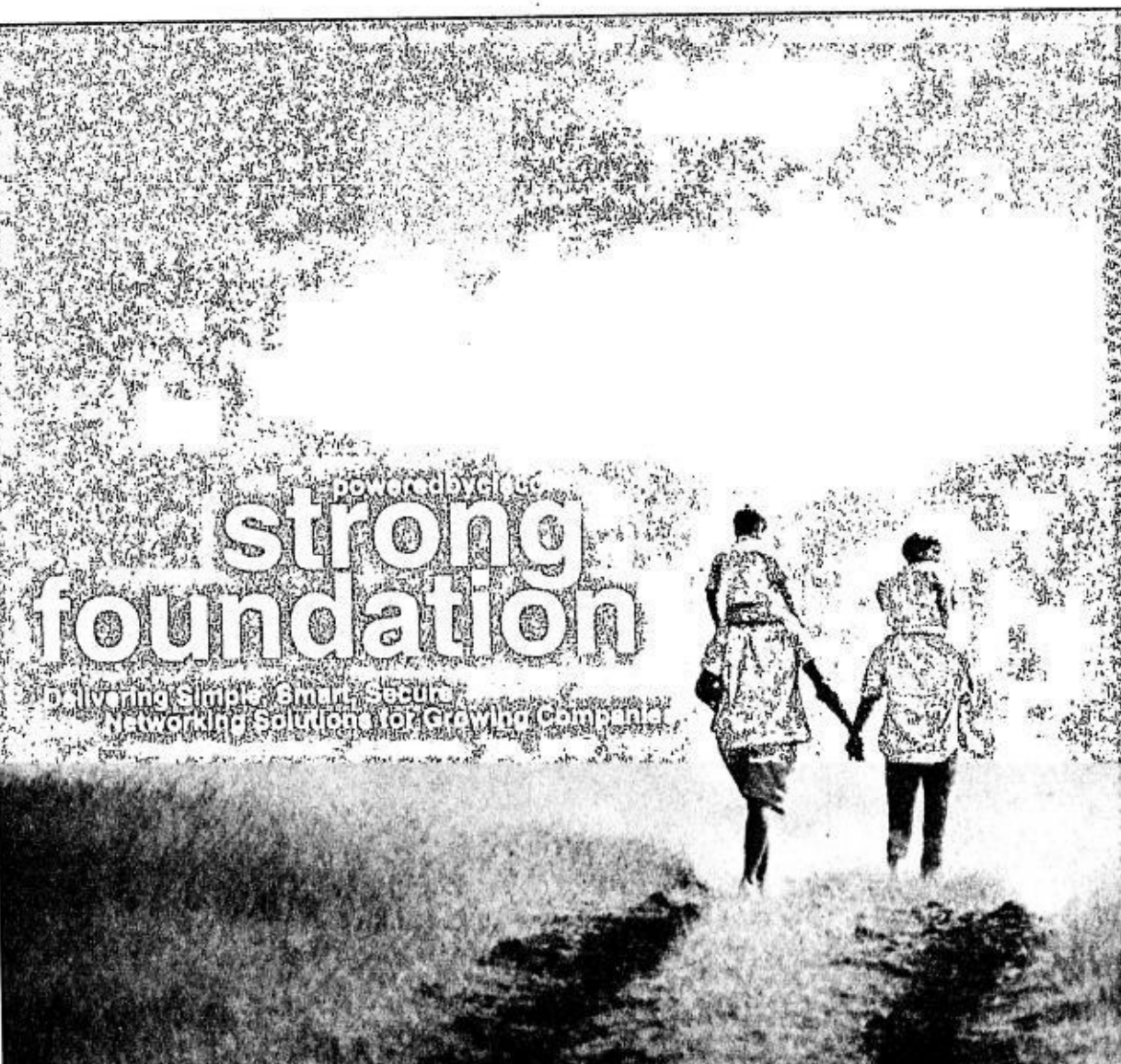
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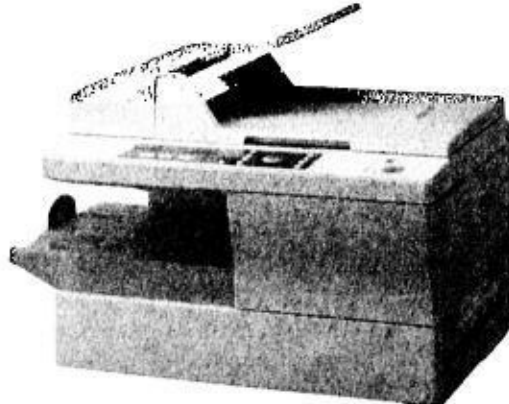
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ING expects peso to further appreciate to 45:\$1

By Doris C. Dumlaog

DUTCH FINANCIAL GIANT ING Bank sees the peso surging to as

high as 45:\$1 in the next two years.

This was the most bullish outlook on the peso published so far,

even surpassing Goldman Sachs' prediction that the local currency would rise to 48:\$1 over the next 12 months.

In a commentary dated March 17, ING economist Tim Condon said the country's strong balance of payment position in the first two months of the year indicated the extent of foreign exchange in-

flow that had helped lift the peso against the greenback.

The Philippines posted a BOP surplus of \$2.03 billion in the first two months of the year, nearly three times the \$685 million recorded in the same period last year.

"The January-February surplus was \$1.3 billion wider year-on-year, which highlights the pres-

sure on the central bank as it attempts to dissipate some of the upward pressure," Condon said.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world.

The peso has been appreciating since the start of the year.

It hit levels not seen since close

to four years ago, and peaked at 50.88:\$1 despite continuing political uncertainties.

As of last Friday, the peso closed at 51.04 against the US dollar.

Not everybody is cheering the strengthening peso, however, as some exporters and economists had said that there were consequences to a strong peso.

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Loan No.: CALYON
Contract No.: Sp05.MBTBP.MI-0060

- The National Power Corporation (NPC) has received a loan from the Buyer's Credit Facility arranged by CALYON through a Master Credit Arrangement for Maramag-Bunawan Project and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract Survey, Design, Supply of Materials/Equipment and Erection/Installation and Commissioning of Maramag-Bunawan 230kV Transmission Backbone Project.
- Bidder shall be from eligible source country of Calyon Buyer's Credit Facility only (United States, Austria, Belgium, England, Denmark, South Korea, Netherlands, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland).
- The National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO) administering the implementation of the said project, now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the: Survey, Design, Supply of Materials/Equipment and Erection/Installation and Commissioning of Maramag-Bunawan 230kV Transmission Backbone Project.
- Bidders may obtain further information from and inspect and acquire the bidding documents of the Office of the Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department, Ground Floor, Power Center, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Telephone No.: 981-2212, 981-2213, 981-4652; Telefax No.: 921-23-08
- A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders starting March 23, 2006 upon submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Forty Thousand Pesos (PHP 40,000.00).
- A two-envelope bidding procedure will be adopted. Bidders are to submit simultaneously two (2)-sealed envelopes, one (1) containing the technical proposal and one (1) containing the price proposal. Initially only the technical proposals will be opened. Technical proposals which are submitted by non-qualified bidders or which are not substantially responsive will be rejected. The substantially responsive technical proposals that have been submitted by qualified bidders are discussed with the bidders and the bidders are requested for full compliance. The bidders may or may not submit a supplementary price proposal, which contain the changes in price resulting from the discussed changes in the technical proposals. The original price proposal and the supplementary price proposal are opened simultaneously in public.
- All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of: Two Hundred Eighteen Thousand One Hundred Forty Seven US Dollars (US\$218,147.00). The bid security must be included in the technical proposal. Pre-bid Conference shall be conducted on April 27, 2006. The deadline for the submission of bids will be on June 7, 2006 at 1:30 P.M. at the aforementioned address. Late submission will be rejected.
- The technical proposals together with the bid security will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
- The price proposals will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the time and date and at the address to be advised by the Employer after approval of the evaluation of the technical proposals.
- The total contract duration for the project is 480 calendar days.
- TRANSCO reserves the right to reject any or all Bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
- All communications shall be addressed to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee at aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) GUILLERMO R. REDOBLADO
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - March 13, 20 & 27, 2006)

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF CAPIZ
City of Roxas, Province of Capiz
(036) 6210-036 Local 254
Fax No.: (036) 6210-036 Local 158
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Capiz thru its BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE invites interested suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

Name of Contract : Materials use for the concreting of Capiz-Iloilo Road, Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Ivisan Road Section

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P4,218,060

Source of Fund : Trust Fund

1. Portland Cement (Type-Ip)	2,1904	bags
2. Coco Lumber 2"3"x10"	8	pcs
3. Assld. C.W. Nails	20 1/2	kls
4. 12mm x 6.0 RSB	100	pcs
5. 16mm x 6.0 RSB	450	pcs
6. Blown Asphalt	2	drums
7. Flat Bar 3/16 x 2 x 6m	50	l.n.m
8. Laminated Sack	50	kgs
9. #16 Tie Wire	100	pcs
10. 1'x2'x10" S4 a lumber	5	pails
11. White Reflectorized Paint	1	pail
12. Yellow Reflectorized Paint		

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Submission of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application of Eligibility	April 3-7, 2006
2. Issuance of Bid documents	April 10-20, 2006
3. Pre-Bid Conference	April 17, 2006
4. Opening of Bids	April 21, 2006

- In order to qualify for publication in the public bidding, bidders should conform to all eligibility requirements as prescribed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Republic Act 9184.
- The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility forms at Provincial General Services Office, Provincial Capitol, Roxas City upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payment of prescribed non-refundable fee of PESOS: Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00).
- Bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the same address.
- Bidders shall drop their duly accomplished technical and financial proposals in two separate envelopes in the bid boxes before the deadline of submission of bids, if they have not earlier pre-qualified.
- All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in a form of cash and must be delivered to the PGSO on or before the bid closing date.
- BAC Committee assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.
- BAC Committee reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure or not to award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) G. ANTONIO ARBIS
Chairman

(PDI - March 13, 2006)

Vehicle makers urged to support ethanol use

By Abigail L. Ho

PUSHING FOR THE USE OF ethanol-blended gasoline, the Philippine Fuel Ethanol Alliance continues to hold dialogs with the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) to get their endorsement for the product.

The Ethanol Alliance said it appreciated Campi's openness in continuing to hold discussions on the matter of using ethanol-blended gasoline.

The group also allayed Campi's apprehensions that vehicle manufacturers would not have enough time to modify their engines, if necessary, to accommodate a 5 percent ethanol content in gasoline, which would eventually be increased to 10 percent.

The Ethanol Alliance said the automotive industry would not likely be caught off guard by the passage of a bill that would mandate the sale and use of ethanol-blended gasoline as implementation would be phased.

Under the pending biofuels bill, the mandatory sale and use of ethanol-blended gasoline will start two years after the effectiveness of the law.

"This should give all stakeholders sufficient time to prepare," the Ethanol Alliance said.

The group said that while the worries of vehicle manufacturers were "understandable," these should not serve as a hurdle to the country's goal of becoming energy self-sufficient through the use of alternative transport fuels.

ICTSI profit hits P1.3B

By Daxim L. Lucas

PORT OPERATOR INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI) earned P1.3 billion in 2005 compared to P1.1 billion the previous year as strong performance from its foreign operations continued to boost revenues.

ICTSI chair and CEO Enrique K. Razon Jr. described 2005 as a "record year" despite the relatively minor income restatements brought about by a shift in accounting standards.

Continued strong performance

at the company's international operations provided most of the increase in full year earnings relative to the prior year.

Foreign operations contributed 34 percent of 2005's consolidated net income, as compared with 27 percent in 2004 and a net loss in 2003.

Razon, however, was disappointed with his company's performance at home.

ICTSI handled consolidated 1.838 million twenty foot equivalent units (TEUs) of cargo in 2005, 2.5 percent more than the 1.793 million handled in 2004.

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May 11, 2006 • 8:30am to 5:00pm**ANGELES, PAMPANGA**Holiday Inn Clark
June 8, 2006 • 8:30am to 5:00pm

Due to limited slots, PC Magazine reserves the right to pre-select the participants for the above seminars.

Seminar fee is just PhP500.00. Inclusive of: Buffet lunch, morning & afternoon snacks, and a 6-month subscription to PC Magazine.

Selected participants shall be contacted prior to the event and shall be given instructions on how to forward payments. Once payment is received, the selected participants shall be given CONFIRMATION CODES. Only interested parties with confirmation codes shall be accepted into the seminars.

Business

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of March 17, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.5	3,000
Bank of Oro Univ. Bank	35	35	34.5	35	206,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	62	62	61.5	62	834,300
China Banking Corp.	680	680	680	680	820
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	500
Export and Int. Bank Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.39	415,400
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	75	76.5	74.5	74.5	57,900
International Exch. Bank	37	37.5	37	37.5	565,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32	32	32	32	3,700
Philippine National Bank	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	1,100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	45,500
Security Bank Corp.	34.5	34.5	34.5	34.5	5,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	500

OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
First Metro Invest. Corp.	3240	3240	3240	3240	120
Manulife Financial Corp.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	20,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2180	2180	2180	2180	450
Sun Life Financial Inc.	0.81	0.82	0.81	0.82	3,450,000
Ivantage Corp.					

INDUSTRIAL	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
First Gen Corp.	41.5	42	41	42.5	453,500
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	13	13	12.75	13	187,000
Manila Electric Co. A	20	20	19.75	20	392,000
Manila Electric Co. B	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	337,000
Manila Water Co. Inc.	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.5	3,094,000
Petron Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	430,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.89	0.89	350,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy					

FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.65	5,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	18.5	19	18.5	18.75	132,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	38.5	38.5	38	38	237,700
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.76	1.76	1.74	1.76	518,000
San Miguel Corp. A	60.5	61	60	60.5	25,000
San Miguel Corp. B	77.5	78	76.5	78	223,200
Universal Robina Corp.	17.25	17.5	17.25	17.5	20,000
Vitacore Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000

CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Southeast Asian Cement	0.29	0.3	0.28	0.29	2,480,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.26	1.3	2,165,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	20,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.35	4.4	4.35	4.4	240,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	200,000

CHEMICALS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	22,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Global Equities Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	400,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.0725	0.0725	1,400,000
Stenel Manufacturing	0.32	0.35	0.32	0.35	90,000

HOLDING FIRMS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	40,000,000
Ayala Corp.	342.5	345	342.5	345	70,040
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	4.95	5	4.95	5	140,000
Aboltiz Equity Ventures	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	285,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	2.46	2.46	2.46	2.46	5,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.21	0.255	0.21	0.23	1,000
APC Group Inc.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	2,690,000
Alcom Gold Res. Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	13,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	250,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	0.93	0.97	0.93	0.97	58,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	10,640,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	200,000
Flit-Estate Corp.	2.44	2.55	2.44	2.41	110,000
Flintinvest Dev. Corp.	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	1,980,000
JG Summit Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,307,000
Medco Holdings	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	80,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.51	0.53	0.51	0.53	7,290,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.135	0.14	0.135	0.14	50,000
Sinophill Corp.	224	225	224	225	50,000
SM Investments Corp.	0.73	0.74	0.73	0.74	85,650
South China Resources Inc.	0.41	0.48	0.41	0.48	7,300,000
Seafrost Resources Corp.	0.13	0.14	0.125	0.14	490,000
Wellax Industries Inc.					3,300,000

PROPERTY	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Ayala Land Inc.	10.5	10.75	10.5	10.5	4,617,000
Belle Corp.	0.99	1.06	0.99	1.04	2,570,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	2,570,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	1,650,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	1,215,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	0.92	0.95	0.92	0.95	360,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.18	0.21	0.18	0.21	10,000
ELB Realty Developers Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.5	0.5	500,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.71	0.75	0.7	0.74	530,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.24	7,820,000
Flintinvest Land Inc.	3	3	3	3	1,530,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	4,480,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.45	0.48	0.45	0.46	50,000
Phil-Estate Land Inc.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	480,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.46	290,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.32	1,000,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	5,037,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.6	11,560,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	0.25	0.27	0.245	0.27	50,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	8	8.1	8	8.1	335,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.14	0.135	0.135	7,300,000
Unwired Holdings Inc.					3,345,000

MEDIA	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	17,500
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.32	101,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.88	0.89	0.88	0.89	500,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	865	865	865	875	32,780
Philippine Tel. Corp.	3.1	3.15	3.05	3.05	3,571,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1630	1630	1620	1625	75,690

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	5,110,000
ionics Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	74,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	600,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0525	0.055	0.0525	0.055	36,500,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	2,000
Philweb Corp.	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.023	27,300,000

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	1,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	12.5	12.5	12	12	458,000
Keppel Shipp. Marine Inc.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	60,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	10,000

HOTEL & LEISURE	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Acasite Phils Hotel Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	705,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.84	1.88	1.82	1.88	5,692,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	900,000

EDUCATION	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Far Eastern University	605	605	600	600	2,470
Ipeople Inc.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	55,000

DIVERSIFIED SERVICES	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Macroasia Corp.	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.6	255,000
Paxys Inc.	8.4	8.5	8.2	8.4	524,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	20,000

MINING	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1,000
Apex Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	5,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.8	6.9	6.7	6.8	875,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.215	0.2	0.215	760,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	5,690,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	245,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.025	41,400,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	30,000,000
Philix Mining Corp. A	2	2.04	2	2.04	4,832,000
Philix Mining Corp. B	2.18	2.22	2.14	2.22	6,127,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	2,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.34	0.35	0.3	0.31	4,820,000
Vulcan Ind't	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	290,000

PREFERRED	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.24	0.245	0.24	0.245	1,410,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	3,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.45	0.47	0.45	0.47	200,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	4	4	3.85	3.9	52,000

WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	11.5	11.75	11.25	11.75	402,900

CURRENCIES

March 19, 2006	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.820681	1.000000	51.0920
Japan	Yen	0.007027	0.008562	0.4374
United Kingdom	Pound	1.442593	1.757800	89.8095
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.105795	0.128911	6.5863
Switzerland	Franc	0.636680	0.775795	39.6369
Canada	Dollar	0.712026	0.867604	44.3276
Singapore	Dollar	0.507533	0.618429	31.5968
Australia	Dollar	0.602954	0.734700	37.5373
Bahrain	Dinar	2.177682	2.653505	135.5729
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.218825	0.266638	13.6231
Brunei	Dollar	0.505969	0.616523	31.4994
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000089	0.000109	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.021032	0.025628	1.3094
UAE	Dirham	0.223461	0.272287	13.9117
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.218500	62.2556
Argentina	Peso	0.267323	0.325733	16.6424
Brazil	Real	0.389872	0.475059	24.2717
Denmark	Kroner	0.134043	0.163332	8.3450
India	Rupee	0.018525	0.022573	1.1533
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.221566	0.269978	13.7937
Mexico	New Peso	0.077124	0.093976	4.8014
New Zealand	Dollar	0.522295	0.636416	32.5158
Norway	Kroner	0.124923	0.152219	7.7772
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013659	0.016644	0.8504
South Africa	Rand	0.133012	0.162075	8.2807
Korea	Won	0.000842	0.001026	0.0524
Sweden	Kroner	0.107017	0.130400	6.6624
Syria	Pound	0.015810	0.019264	0.9842
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025302	0.030831	1.5752
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000382	0.000466	0.0238

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Editor Leo Magno

iBlog, iPodcast: Citizen journalism using tech

By Leo Magno

(Third of four parts)

WE HAVE DISCUSSED WHY NEW media citizen journalists—bloggers and podcasters in particular—are getting influential, if we are to define influence as being noticed and listened to by government, mainstream media and the public. We have also discussed the pitfalls of referring to this trend as a new form of journalism. We have also heard from mainstream media and from new media publishers who, they said, do not even consider themselves journalists.

Theoretically then, bloggers and podcasters should not be harassed or censored if they are seen merely as flies that refuse to go away. But why do charges of sedition and active censorship still occur? Why are blogs and podcasts being monitored by government? Why is there a seeming insecurity on the part of traditional media? Why should new media grassroots journalism be considered a threat?

Blogs and podcasts are disruptive technologies. They arrive at the party, offer something new, start playing a new song and dance to a new beat, they tear the piñata down and before you know it the tables have been overturned and the party will never be the same again. That party is traditional media—television, radio and print. Any new addition to a set with the potential to disrupt established

norms would naturally be seen as a threat. Traditional media is pushed out of its comfort zone of having the final say on matters of news and opinion. Traditional media may even feel that with grassroots journalism they may become disenfranchised.

Old habits, new habits

Perhaps blogs, podcasts and new media in general are seen as threats because of changing information assimilation behaviors of the audience.

SPECIAL REPORT

"Already today, some blogs have more regular readers than major nationwide newspapers in the United States," said Ronald Meinardus of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. "Blogs are particularly popular with younger people. Once they grow older they will have different media consumption patterns than today's adults. I am not saying that the newspapers will disappear, but their share of the media pie will shrink."

As New York-based future media analyst and new media consultant Andrew Zolli said: "Why is newspaper readership declining? Why are people not going to movies? It's because people are making their own media, and the low cost of participation is allowing them to become co-equal participants. Do you think they need to ask permission from journalists?"

This, Zolli said, is why initially there will be animosity between new media and old media.

"What is changing for them and for journalists is that the line between be-

ing an editor and a writer is blurring," he said. "The bad thing about it is that it's becoming too politicized. A turf war is happening between traditional journalists and the new online journalists."

"Fewer people are buying newspapers and watching TV, I am conscious of that fact. They're going somewhere else," said Joshua Gliddon, Australian reporter and blogger for The Bulletin, a weekly news magazine published in Sydney.

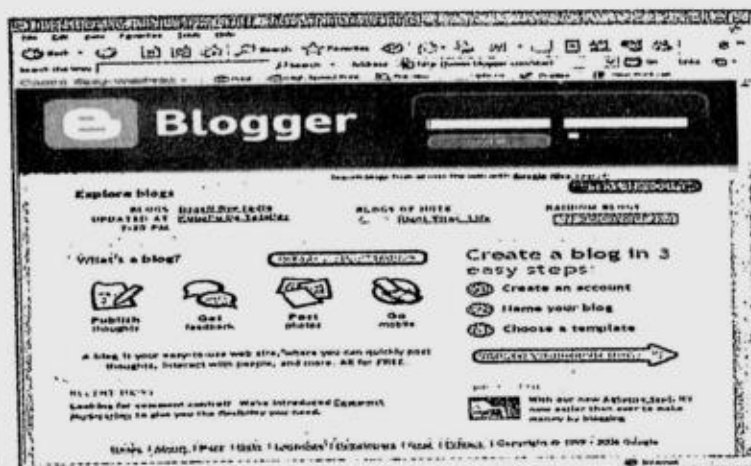
"I think us journalists have to address three things today," he said. "One is that we no longer set the agenda. Bloggers are setting the agenda. We're putting the reportage in the hands of the people. The scary part is that traditional media just don't get it despite the fact that the shift is happening and it's already here."

"Two is that in the world of blogs and podcasts, people want to hear more human voices. They want to hear real voices. There's a lack of trust that's widening between the people and traditional media."

"Three is that us journalists, if we're gonna adapt to this change, we need to be transparent. There is a lack of transparency and we need to admit our mistakes. If we don't, someone else online will point them out through their blogs, and those mistakes will remain forever."

New watchdogs

So here we are seeing a watchdog function for citizen journalists. Whereas the media used to have that sole function, citizens themselves are becoming watchdogs not just of government but of media as well. They are becoming



FREE blog hosts like Blogger have made it easier for ordinary citizens without journalistic backgrounds to become their own reporters, editors and publishers rolled into one. But is this good or bad?

watchdogs of the watchdogs.

"Blogs and podcasts not only pull media consumers away from the traditional media, in some cases they are also rather critical of the traditional media," said Meinardus. "Slipping into the role of the watchdog of newspapers, radio programs and television, is just one of the innovations. I find even more important that blogs and podcasts target specific audiences the traditional media do not reach. They fill niches which the traditional media simply cannot deal with. The new term being used for this is 'narrowcasting' as opposed to 'broadcasting.'"

"Blogging is a powerful tool of freedom of expression that has enthused millions of ordinary people," said Julien Pain, head of the Internet Freedom Desk of Reporters Without Borders. "Passive consumers of information have become energetic participants in a new kind of journalism—what United States blog pioneer Dan Gillmor calls 'grassroots journalism'—by the people, for the people. I think that bloggers and citizen journalists have a role to play in this field. They monitor what's being said in mainstream media and very often correct mistakes which are made by traditional journalists."

The programs of various organizations like the Committee to Protect Bloggers, the Reporters Without Borders and the Poynter Institute may stand witness to the growing influence of grassroots journalism and the effort of individual citizens to join the public sphere via new media.

For instance, the Committee to Protect Bloggers has been acting as a clearing house for information on incarcerated members of the blogging community. In cooperation with the Committee to Protect Journalists, it is monitoring global free speech rights violations and is listing down the harassment of bloggers by authoritarian governments, whether or not they are journalists.

The Reporters Without Borders is helping spread the word about expression suppression worldwide. It has set up a dedicated Internet Freedom Desk and is issuing a Handbook for Bloggers and Cyber-dissidents to help the cause of free speech online. It has even institutionalized the "Freedom Blog Awards," which Malaysia's Jeff Ooi won last year.

The Poynter Institute has actively been conducting trainings on how to incorporate new media channels like blogging and podcasting into the mainstream. The idea is to harness views from the grassroots and lift that up to mainstream media for a wider, more established audience base.

Given that these journalists' organizations are now protecting new media expression, we are seeing the two worlds of grassroots expression and traditional media crossing paths. These organizations are giving due recognition to bloggers and podcasters.

"I expect mainstream media to become more personal and less corporate in reaction to the blogging and podcasting trends," said Steve Outing, senior editor at the Poynter Institute. "Also, more professional journalists who blog for traditional media companies are being allowed to publish without pre-publication editing. So blogging and podcasting have

loosened things up considerably already."

So perhaps, instead of being seen as a threat, citizen journalists and grassroots journalism should be viewed as partners in elevating ideas to those who hold power. Perhaps this is precisely why people who hold power perceive citizen journalism as a threat. Could we be headed toward a combination of mainstream and grassroots media, or are the two irreconcilably different?

Quo vadis?

Earlier, we heard bloggers and podcasters themselves declare that they are not journalists. However, we have also heard experts say that grassroots journalism enabled by technologies like blogging and podcasting should become or are already becoming part of mainstream media. Will journalists disappear? Where is all this headed?

A 2005 Pew Internet report (<http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/144/reportdisplay.asp>) shows that while 27 percent of Internet users read blogs, 62 percent didn't know what a blog was. And so blogging is moving into the daily part of online information gathering. Readers do not need to know whether it is a blog or not—people just read them as they would any other source on the Web, without worrying about technical differences.

With this in mind, do blogging and podcasting have a chance of becoming viable sources of information in the future?

"Yes, but that's a qualified yes," said Outing of the Poynter Institute. "Within both blogging and podcasting are a wide range of users—from professional journalists using those new media tools, all the way down to teenagers blogging and podcasting for fun. But in between, there definitely are some non-journalists who are doing high-quality work, and some of it is quite credible. So, for readers and listeners of blogs and podcasts, it takes some analysis to figure out if they're reading or listening to a credible source. With most (not all!) traditional media, you already have some assurance of credibility because of the existing brand name."

The Friedrich Naumann Foundation's Meinardus, although a liberal thinker with his own podcast, prefers to tread with caution.

"Media are instruments of communication for the information and entertainment of the people," he said. "In a democracy, they play a crucial role in controlling government. Their existence, and also their freedom, is essential for liberal societies. Blogs and podcasts are new—almost revolutionary—media. I call them do-it-yourself media. Everybody with just a little technical infrastructure, basically not more than a PC and an Internet connection, can be his or her own publisher. This is a fundamental democratization of the media. It abolishes the so-called gatekeepers. In the traditional media, the gatekeepers, basically the editors and publishers, control what is published and what is not. This is no longer the case today."

Journalistic standards

This does not mean, however, that journalists will be replaced by bloggers and pod-

casters, as Meinardus explained:

"Editors safeguard professional standards. Many blogs and podcasts lack journalistic professionalism. I assume it will not take long and the market will sort out the blogosphere. Only the good ones with a clear message and an acceptable standard of presentation will survive and compete with traditional media."

Meinardus believes that traditional media will not disappear with the coming of newer forms of media.

"This is not the first time that we've heard of the approaching demise of traditional media," he said. "On more than one occasion, newspapers, radio and television have proven capable of adapting and surviving."

Curt Hopkins, director of the Committee to Protect Bloggers, shared the same thoughts.

"Journalism is work," said Hopkins. "It takes experience to figure out what the story is, how to research it and how to interview, how to write in the most effective manner. Journalism will not be replaced by blogging. It's too hard. But it has already been affected by it and augmented by it. There are bloggers who are essentially journalists, journalists who are bloggers and bloggers who tend toward journalism."

Just because one has access to new media, said Nokia vice president for multimedia Mauro Montanaro, it does not mean that the content will be better than the ones found in traditional media.

"The problem is that as barriers to entry are getting lower and more people are becoming reporters, it doesn't mean that the content is getting better," he said. "That's why we still need the professionalism in there when people start becoming reporters and cameramen on their own."

Old dog, new tricks

So traditional media has staying power and will not disappear because of the inherent shortcomings of new media, but perhaps the mainstream could also take some tips from new media on how to revitalize reporting. The strength of personal grassroots reports is that they offer views and perspectives that often differ from the tired, old and monolithic ways of TV, radio and newspaper reporting.

The traditional view is that immediacy is the most important ingredient in the news reporting concoction—however breaks the news first while retaining accuracy is the winner. But maybe people are looking for a different perspective aside from quick flash reports.

"I think there's 'newsflash fatigue' in the world," said media analyst Tyler Brule in an interview with CNN. "There's been a slight loss of sense of urgency now. People want to see not just breaking news but also a view of what happened the whole day. People want perspective and that's provided by people in the places where the news happens, so we have blogs and podcasts from that country or that, to give a local flavor of what truly happened. And without this perspective in TV, we might see the death of the rolling 24-hour newsflash."

These, according to Brule, are being done by new media and could be integrated into mainstream media to reinvig-

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iBlog...

rate news reporting.

"The challenge is rethinking the game," he said. "The rolling 24-hour news channels are not limited by technology. There's also a question of targeting, but the problem is pretty much everyone is chasing the same angle. The likes of Yahoo! and Google aggregate all of these points of view and analyses coming from blogs so they offer a better overall view beyond the news-flash."

This kind of integration Brule referred to may already be happening as citizen journalism slowly becomes part of the mainstream. This would result in hybrid media that includes grassroots views aside from reports from traditional journalists. This may even be changing theories on communications flow altogether.

"New types of media will soon emerge," said Pain of the Reporters Without Borders. "I believe in the

collaboration between mainstream media and citizen journalists. So far they compete. I hope that in the future they'll be able to work together, each one doing what he does best. We're at the beginning of a revolution for mainstream media. They have to catch the train of citizen journalism, or they'll be in serious trouble."

Going mainstream

Asked if he thought that five years from now, blogs and podcasts would become part of mainstream media, Pain replied:

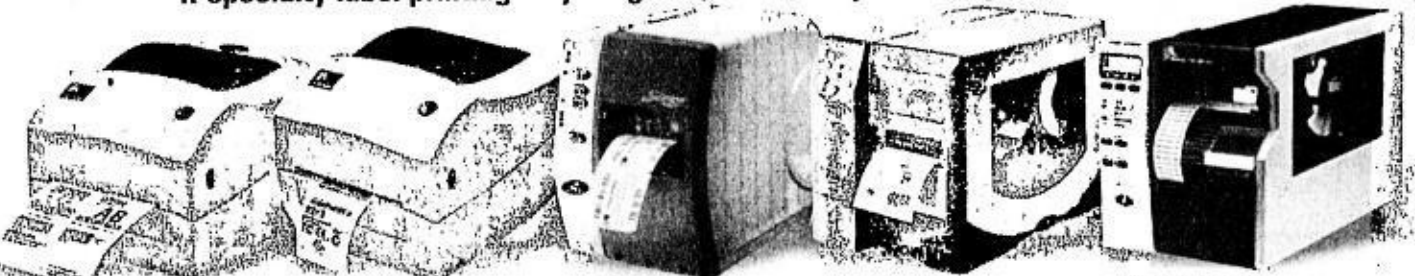
"I hope so. But maybe in five years bloggers won't exist anymore. Blogs are just a form taken by citizen journalism at a certain point in time. Other forms of citizen journalism will probably emerge and overtake blogging and podcasting. That's what is so great with the Internet. It's evolving very fast."

(To be concluded next week)

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Tech Support and Maintenance for SMBs: Prevention and Cure

By Ricky Banaag, Country Manager, Intel Microelectronics Philippines, Inc.

Investment in information technology by small and medium business (SMBs) in Asia is skyrocketing. After weathering the economic downturn, SMBs are now looking to grow their business using information technology (IT), with analysts predicting a remarkable increase of 19% in SMB technology spending in 2004.¹ However, buying hardware is only the first step. The way this technology is managed will greatly affect how profitable the investment will be.

Support and maintenance costs SMBs a great deal of time and money. According to Gartner, the purchase price of a new personal computer (PC) accounts for only 20 to 30 per cent of the total cost of owning that PC, with the rest going to supporting and maintaining this hardware.² These support costs rise substantially for older systems, driving up the operational expenses that comprise most of the 70 to 80 per cent of the total cost of owning a computer.³

With IT investment surging and system complexity increasing, IT support is crucial to all businesses. System downtime often translates to lost business. So how should an SMB effectively manage its IT system?

The Quick Cure

When you're ill, you usually see a doctor. If you're technology shows symptoms of a glitch, call your "digital doctor" - your IT vendor help desk. Below are some tips to assist the help desk technician assess and fix the problem:

Right problem, right person

The most important element to remember when talking to a helpdesk is patience! Just as your doctor takes time to walk through your symptoms before developing a diagnosis, help desk technicians must also walk through your system's symptoms. Try to be patient as the technician assesses your problem and identifies a solution.

Occasionally, the help desk technician may require a second opinion to accurately pin point the cause of the problem. Just as you would seek the advice of a medical specialist, don't be afraid to ask for assistance from a higher level engineer or manager if needed. It can sometimes save quite a bit of time.

Keep Detailed Logs

Like doctors keep records of your medical history, keep a record each of your technical problems and the solutions offered by the helpdesk. The effort spent documenting problems can help reduce the long-term costs of your system support, as you will know how to resolve these problems if they arise again.

The Preventative Approach

No one likes being ill, which is why the healthcare concept of "prevention" rather than "cure" is growing in popularity. Most people would rather avoid getting sick, rather than visiting a doctor on a regular basis. Adopting a preventative approach also works for technology systems. In the case of technology, prevention starts with good technology planning. Below are a few considerations to help prevent system downtime and reduce maintenance costs.

Regular PC Replacement Program

Regardless of brand, your technology should be current. The optimum lifecycle is three years for a desktop PC and two years for notebooks. Beyond this timeframe, maintenance and upgrades can cost more than replacing the entire PC! It may sound strange, but without scheduling regular updates, companies tend to practice a "crash and burn" approach to IT maintenance. By replacing computers only when they fail, they not only miss out on the productivity gains of more current computers, but they also wind up with dozens of different hardware configurations and out-of-date software, costing more in ongoing maintenance long term. Orchestrating technical support for such a haphazard system will be a full time job, even if you only have a few of these ailing computers.

Q: Why buy the best PC I can afford?

A: A sufficiently powerful, balanced system allows multitasking to operate effectively. For example, PCs equipped with the latest technologies such as the Intel® Pentium® D processor enables users to multitask and process background tasks more efficiently. With two processor cores, a PC can handle more applications or programs at one time. This means, more system maintenance, such as virus software, backup and indexing, can occur while you are doing work, which means less time spent on the phone trying to fix problems.

Because aging computers can't handle complex applications, they can be a huge IT burden. This sidetracks you from your core business responsibilities and increases maintenance overhead, leading to a more complex and costly system. The older the PC, the more costs accumulate. Time, human resources and component parts are required and repairs can be expensive.

Keeping your system simple

Keeping your system simple by standardizing hardware and software can lower the support costs in the long run. Imagine how much time and effort is wasted re-inventing the wheel if you need to trouble-shoot the same problem of your PCs from different manufacturers.

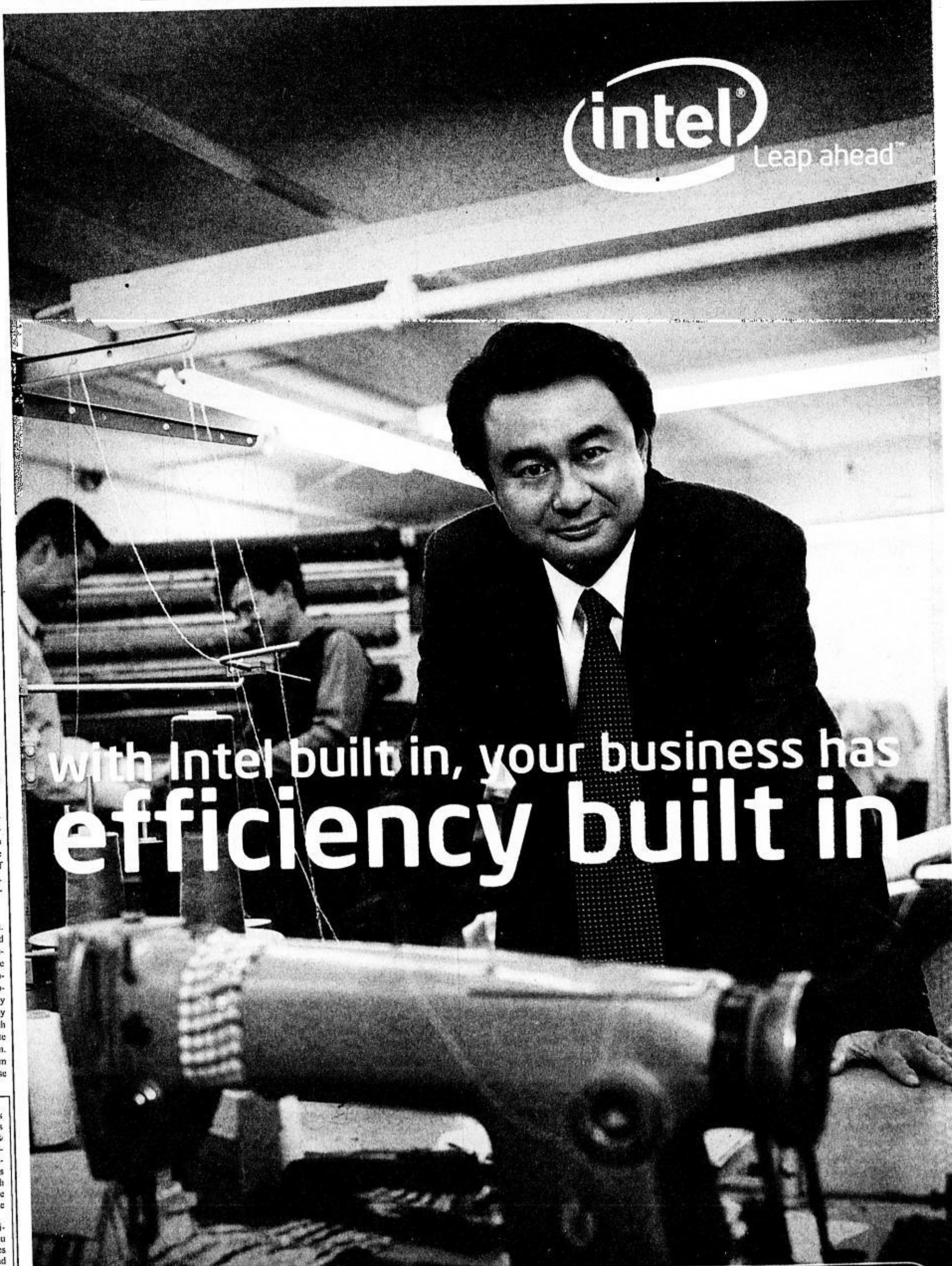
Conclusion

Managing an IT system should be looked at as an opportunity, not a burden. When your system is running smoothly, its benefits cannot be underestimated. A study in the U.S. found that 93% of all companies that lost their data for 10 days or more filed for bankruptcy within one year of the disaster. A full shutdown like this is uncommon. It usually only results when a company does little or nothing to maintain their IT system's integrity. A little downtime can be all the time your competitors need to move in. But with these simple maintenance techniques, you will be ahead of the game.

■ ■ ■

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¹http://www.amr-partners.com/ami/section/prestapril_2004_top_ten_trends_for_2005.doc, ex-holst Japan
²Gartner Research (June 2003). "Janus Desktop TCO: An Overview". Gartner, Inc. June 19, 2003.
³The Financial Aspects of PC Fleet Management, www.intel.com
⁴Information security: your responsibility as a company director or manager, Australian Business News magazine, June/July 2003



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IN THE MATTER OF THE
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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that on September 15, 2005, a registration statement was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission for and on behalf of LEXER INCORPORATED to cover 1,020 Non-Proprietary Timshares of Lexer Homes Beachworld Resort (the Project) with an offer price enumerated as follows:

Number of Shares Offered	Unit Price	Offering
Red 500	200	P 225,000
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	150	295,000
White 200	88	176,000
	88	200,000
	88	220,000
Blue 280	88	144,000
	88	165,000
	88	195,000

The total estimated gross proceeds from the offering amount to Two Hundred Twenty Four Million Six Hundred Seventy Thousand Pesos (P224,670,000.00). According to the papers presented, the following persons are the official directors of the corporation:

NAME	POSITION
ALEJANDRO G. CRUZ-HERRERA	Chairman and CEO
BERNARDO R. CRUZ-HERRERA	Director & Corp. Secretary
ELPIDIO Y. CUSTODIO	Director/Asst. Corp. Secretary
MANUEL R. TOLOME	Director/Assistant Treasurer
ALEXIS R. CRUZ-HERRERA	Principal Operating Officer/Comptroller
RODERICK P. BAYBAYAN	Principal Accounting Officer
ANITA L. MACUTO	Principal Treasury Officer

Said registration statement and other papers/documents attached thereto are open to inspection by interested parties during business hours, and copies thereof, photostatic or otherwise, shall be furnished to every party at such reasonable fees as the Commission may prescribe.

(Bgd.) JUSTINA F. CALLAGHAN
Director

(PDI - March 18 & 20, 2006)

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All particulars relative to the Bid Security, Evaluation of Bids and Award shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of COA Circular 92-386, Rules and Regulations on Supply and Property Management in the Local Governments.

The schedule of activities is as follows:

Activities	Schedule	Venue
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI)	March 15-30, 2006	City Admin. Office
2. Issuance of Bid Documents	March 15-30, 2006	City Admin. Office
3. Site Inspection	March 31, 2006, 8-12 PM	
4. Pre-Bid Conference	March 31, 2006, 2:00 PM	City Admin. Office
5. Receipt and Opening of Bids	April 11, 2006, 3:00 PM	City Admin. Office

The Committee on Awards will issue Bidding Documents to bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 10,000.00 to the Cebu City Cashier.

The City Government of Cebu assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

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Shown from left are: Ma. Bella Cantada - VP for Administration; Maicie Cuna - VP for Outbound; Ma. Paz Alberto - Secretary General; Tellie Francisco - Asst. Secretary General; Lulu Velasco - Treasurer; Paul So - Auditor; Jose Clemente III - President; Congressman Edgar Chatto - Chairman, Committee on Tourism; Teodoro Bautista - Trustee; Norma Cacho - Public Relations Officer; John Paul Cabalza - Trustee; Michelle Sierra - Trustee; Sylvia Sangco-Trustee; Mary Chua - Trustee; Chiqui Teotico - VP for Inbound

DOLE: 750,000 new jobs improve employment level in January

ACTING LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT SECRETARY MANUEL G. IMSON reported that the country's employment situation markedly improved in January 2006 as the total employment volumes nationwide rose by 750,000 compared with the same period last year. Imson, in a memorandum to President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, said that this translates to an employment growth of 2.4 percent, "which is a big improvement from the marginal growth rate of only 0.3 percent posted in 2004." Complementing the local employment growth, the Acting Labor Chief said that the DOLE's optimized marketing efforts earlier resulted in the global deployment, in 2005, of 988,383 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), or a growth rate of 5.87 percent (54,795) compared to 933,588 in 2004. Imson apprised the President that local employment growth was recorded strongest in the combined agriculture, fishery and forestry sector while employment in the services sector also posted growth. Services employment, he said, posted a 373,000 increase with all sectors registering positive employment growth, a recovery from last year's slump (0.2%). The growth in services employment was highest in private households with employed persons at 102,000, followed by wholesale and retail trade (85,000), education (58,000), and real estate, renting, and business activities (44,000). He added that all but five regions posted growth in employment with the highest observed in Region IV-A at 163,000 followed by Regions XII and VII at 102,000 and 85,000, respectively. Imson noted that the employment gains in agriculture and services offset the slight 1.9 percent decline registered in the industry sector attributed mainly to the seasonal slump in construction activity.

He said that electricity, gas and water sub-sector remained a bright spot after posting a five percent growth in employment from 128,000 in 2005 to 133,000 in January 2006.

"Occupation-wise, the share of the laborers and unskilled workers posted the biggest increase both in levels and percent share with 382,000 and 0.46 percent point, respectively," Imson further said.

A total of 12 services and industry sub-sectors, along with the agriculture sector, accounted for the 750,000 employment increment posted nationwide this January, Imson said.

2nd Dr. Rodrigo B. Floro Memorial Cup

THE ASIAN HOSPITAL GOLF CLUB HEADED BY ITS PRESIDENT, DR. Hermogenes Villareal, will having the 2nd Dr. Rodrigo B. Floro Memorial Cup on Wednesday, March 22 at the Palmer Course of the Orchard Golf and Country Club, Gen. E. Aguinaldo Km. 27 Highway, Dasmariñas, Cavite. A charitable event in memory and honor of the late Dr. Rodrigo B. Floro, who served as the first medical director of the Asian Hospital and Medical Center (2002-2004), the memorial cup is envisioned to continue to help the various charitable projects which Dr. Floro started during his time, among which are, the Tuloy sa Don Bosco Foundation and the Annual Medical/Surgical/Dental Mission to Aklan, as well as assistance to the Asian Hospital Charities. Registration is on March 22 from 8:00 to 9:30 AM at the main lobby of The Orchard. Shot-Gun Tee-Off will start at 10:00 AM. Among the giveaways and raffle prizes during the awarding ceremonies at 6:00 PM are two Hole-in-One Roundtrip Business Class Tickets to the United States courtesy of Asiana Airlines. For more information and for pre-tournament flight arrangements, interested parties may call golf directors Dr. Ike Mendoza at 0917-6203900 or Dr. Marc Reyes at 0917-5311911

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MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2006

Incentives for new cement projects sought

Additional capacity needed to meet increasing demand

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A GROUP OF REAL ESTATE developers and contractors are pushing for the entry of more cement factories in a bid to bring down prices of their most important input.

Pedro C. Tario, president of the Chamber of Real Estate Builders Associations, said his group was in favor of enticing new players in the cement industry by including it in the list of preferred sectors qualified for incentives under the government's Investments Priorities Plan.

"We are hopeful that such a move would result in more stable prices of cement in the near future," Tario said.

He said Creba members have been forced to absorb very steep increases in cement prices over the past three years. The price of 40-kilogram bag cement rose to a range of P150 to P170 from only about P70 in 2002.

Creba was reacting to reports that cement manufacturing projects might be able to enjoy incentives again as the government was considering the inclusion of these ventures in the IPP Cement manufacturing used to be in the

IPP but was delisted three years ago because of excess production capacity.

The government started considering its inclusion in the list again after data showed the possibility of production falling short of the fast-growing demand for cement.

Projections in the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan for 2004-2010 indicate that the construction industry's demand for cement would grow at an average of 12 percent a year, which means demand could reach 468 million bags in 2010, which is higher than the existing production capacity of 462 million bags.

But Tario said the shortage situation was already evident despite claims of the Cement Manufacturers Association of the Philippines about current capacity and demand.

"How can selling prices be at historic highs when demand is weak and there is alleged overcapacity in the industry?" the Creba chief asked.

Tario said the government should look into the matter of the "true domestic supply situation" and not rely on reported numbers from existing manufacturers.

Let's cancel our Newsweek subscriptions

IN THE MARCH 6 ISSUE OF Newsweek, reporters Marites Vitug and Joe Cochrane wrote in the Periscope section: "Indeed, the Philippines remains so impoverished that the very middle class that's expected to nurture political pluralism is actually shrinking."

This incredible sentence is not a quote from a report of the census bureau or any of the absurd opinion survey firms that abound in Manila. By itself, Newsweek figured out that the middle class is shrinking.

Newsweek did not say whether an expansion of the lower class caused the shrinkage, or some of the middle class sank to the lower class and/or rose to the upper crust.

How did Newsweek compute the shrinkage? How many noses were counted? How many income tax returns were examined? What crystal ball was used?

We only have to look around us to dispute Newsweek. If you drive up north of Manila on the main highway, you will see fields planted to rice, corn, sugar cane and tobacco. If you drive south to Bicol, you will also see coconut plantations and citrus groves heavy with fruit.

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General



Since the daytime traffic is clogged with cargo trucks, people prefer to travel at night. When I was in Davao two years ago, the sprawling banana plantations were still there. My guess is the Visayas is thriving as well.

This impoverished country spends more on education than national defense. This has been the unwavering government policy since before World War II.

Today, over 21 million—fully one-fourth of the population—and more than the population of Australia, are in school. This is unmatched in the Third World and, I suspect, in most of the First.

Our colleges and universities can accommodate quite comfortably the entire population of Singapore. Every year, half a million men and women earn college diplomas on a dizzying array of disciplines.

In government schools, education up to high school is tuition free. Private schools, espe-

cially Catholic schools, buttress the vast educational system.

Out of school youth is still a problem, but an improving economy should bring this problem down.

Because of our universal educational system, eight million (almost 10 percent of the population) Filipinos find lucrative work abroad. There is no hospital in the US that does not have a Filipino doctor and nurse.

Filipino engineers are building roads and bridges in Afghanistan. A quarter of a million Filipino able seamen man ocean-going vessels, including American aircraft carriers.

The Filipino woman has been making her mark abroad. More countries are discovering the fine Filipino nurse. President Clinton's personal lady physician at the White House was a Filipino. After his recent heart bypass operation, a Filipino nurse took care of him at the ICU. Now, the first lady head chef at the White House is a Filipino.

These overseas Filipino workers send back to their impoverished country \$10 billion a year through the banking system. Through unofficial conduits,

they send another \$15 billion a year. (Only the migrant workers of India and Mexico send more money home.)

This cold cash is spent on new homes, education for the kids, insurance policies and to splurge at Star City.

In multinational firms, Filipinos now occupy senior executive positions that used to be the exclusive preserve of expatriate foreigners.

Our impoverished country has a vibrant life insurance industry. The Insurance Commission reports that, in the five-year period ending 2003, new policies increased by an unprecedented average of about 34 percent yearly. The top life insurance firms continue to post record sales.

This is the best indicator that the middle class is actually expanding.

Of course, poverty still stalks the land. Two blocks from my house is a squatter colony. Every day, I pass by the hovels along the railroad tracks. But, I have no doubt that more and more gutsy Filipinos are scratching their way out of poverty than ever before.

I wrote Newsweek that I was not renewing my subscription. How about you?

BSP issues tougher . . . From page B1

was in line with the BSP's recent moves to tighten its own policy as a lender of last resort in dealing with banks or with the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

Tetangco said problem banks with an existing MoA with the BSP on prompt corrective action would have a better chance of getting emergency liquidity or any other government-supported assistance.

Another BSP official said the PCA

framework would work on a case-to-case basis. A major departure from the BSP's old tack was that a different set of criteria had now been set to determine what would trigger the enforcement of PCA.

"The enforcement of PCA, in the past, was limited to undercapitalization," the official said. "Now it will consider other factors, recognized under international standards, that affect the viability of an entity."

Doris C. Dumlaog

Gov't to raise . . . From page B1

the government currently gets 58 centavos from the domestic market and 42 centavos from foreign sources such as commercial sovereign bond floats and official development assistance (ODA) loans from multilateral agencies.

"We don't know yet what the new

ratio will be," a DBCC source said. "It's now under study by the BSP."

The source said the government would likely cut down on foreign commercial bond issuances this year instead of giving up cheaper ODA lending windows from foreign donors.

For the rest of the year, the government has to raise another \$900 million to complete its planned borrowing of \$3.1 billion from foreign commercial sources.

"If we borrow in pesos, the better for us because the peso is strong," said another source from the BSP. "The government should

even prepay some commercial foreign loans."

The BSP last week announced the planned prepayment of \$500 million worth of debts in April or six months ahead of maturity, taking advantage of the historic rise in the country's gross international reserves.



Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City
Healthline 637-9999 www.philhealth.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
No. 2006-009 g

RE-BIDDING FOR THE LEASE OF ADDITIONAL WAREHOUSE
(FOR THE USE OF MOTOR POOL AND SUPPLY UNITS)

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), through the Corporate Operating Budget (COB) 2006, intends to apply the sum of P44,320,000.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Lease for two (2) years of Additional Warehouse for the use of the Motor Pool and Supply Units. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

PhilHealth now invites Bids from eligible Bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Bidding for the Lease of Additional Warehouse for the use of the Motor Pool and Supply Units, with the following specifications:

1. Location

The location of the warehouse shall be within one (1) kilometer radius from the Citystate Centre. The area must not be subject to flooding.

2. Basic Requirements

- 2.1. Floor Area : 1,000 sq.m. to 1,200 sq.m. it may be a single unit, or two (2) separate units with a total area of 1,000 sq.m. to 1,200 sq.m.
- 2.2. Flooring : Concrete Finish
- 2.3. Electricity : With Power supply and serviceable electrical lighting
- 2.4. Water Supply & Drainage System : With Water supply and existing working drainage system
- 2.5. Office Space : With existing office space (enclosed structure)

3. Other Conditions

- 3.1. Free moving-in for a period of thirty (30) days.
- 3.2. Major repair shall be undertaken by the lessor.
- 3.3. Title must be free from liens and encumbrances.
- 3.4. Lessor guarantees peaceful, continued and uninterrupted use of the premises, with full beneficial use of the leased premises.
- 3.5. Repair and washing of vehicles shall be allowed at least in the one-half portion of the warehouse.
- 3.6. The lessor shall perform the following:
 - 3.6.1. Termite Control : once a year
 - 3.6.2. Pest and Rodent Control : every three (3) months

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of the Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino Citizens/Sole Proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws of regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino Citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such after the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees (OSBAC) in the Central Office of PhilHealth, Room 1107, 11th floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City, and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from March 15 to 29, 2006 at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of P40,000.00 cash. The prospective Bidder or his authorized representative shall receive the Bidding Documents personally.

PhilHealth will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on March 31, 2006 at 10:30 a.m. at the OSBAC Conference Room (Rm. 1106), PhilHealth Central Office, 11th floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the OSBAC Conference Room on or before April 17, 2006, 10:30 a.m. The official time shall be based on the wall clock located at the OSBAC Conference Room. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on April 17, 2006, 10:30 a.m. at OSBAC Conference Room. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

PhilHealth shall require the prospective bidders to submit copy of contracts within the relevant period of CY 2004 and CY 2005 whether ongoing, completed or awarded but not yet started.

PhilHealth reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office
Mr. Joseph O. Vergara
Rm. 1107, 11th Floor Citystate Centre
709 Shaw Blvd., Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City
Tel. (02) 637-9999 local 1128, 1130 and 1830
e-mail add: osbac@philhealth.gov.ph
Facsimile No. 637-4735
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(Sgd.) Atty. VALENTIN C. GUANIO
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee for Goods and Services
(PDI-March 13 & 20, 2006)

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Come and see our products at the
37th BPI Installment Madness at Glorietta
Activity Center from March 15-April 2, 2006!

People, Events & Products

Panasonic launches clearest camera phones

PANASONIC MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS CO LTD presents two new cutting edge high-definition camera phones-the VS6 and VS7-that are literally setting the new standards in the mobile phone industry.

With the VS6's super slim clamshell design,

the 2.0 mega-pixel camera phone boasts of fine quality photographs and movies. It is supported by a high-definition 2.2-inch QVGA screen with an outstanding brightness of 300 candela/m2-this means that it is up to 50 percent brighter than other handsets in the market and

offers images that seem to leap out to life! The 16 million colors on its screen brings up the VS6 as one of the most technically advanced screen technology in the market today.

The built-in 2.0 mega-pixel, 5x

digital zoom camera comes with a 15-frame continuous shooting function, which is perfect for snapshots taken in quick succession. The camera also allows the user to take close-up shots of subjects with crisp, sharp images. The VS6 has

PANASONIC VS7: One push auto open features



32MB of built-in memory for storing the photos and in addition to the impressive camera function, the handset has video capability, allowing users to capture and playback video footage with sound. The VS6 comes with Bluetooth wireless technology allowing users to share images and video clips effortlessly and also enjoy wire-free connectivity when using a Bluetooth handsfree headset.

The VS6 just weighs 101g and is only 21mm thin. The "one push auto open" function provides quick and easy access to all of the VS6's functions. Users can enjoy real music ringtones as well as interactive gaming with 3D games and Java is supported for you to download more. The VS6 is a GPRS tri-band phone that can support up to eight hours of talk time or a standby time of up to 430 hours. It is available in a sleek black color.

Brightest screen

The latest star to shine among Panasonic's state-of-the-art mobile phones, of course, is VS7. An upgraded version of the VS6, the VS7 has the brightest and clearest screen to date with its high-performance large 2.5-inch color TFT screen. It features a 240 x 320 pixels QVGA resolution enhanced to approximately 16 million colors and a brightness that goes as high as 300 candela/m2. Capture portraits or your favorite moments through its digital two megapixel camera with video recording and be impressed by its screen, which depicts images that always look remarkably true to life! You can also read the very clear screen in almost all kinds of lighting situations. Even better, the VS7 is MP3-capable so you can download ringtones using this feature.

It is also equipped with the same impressive 2.0 megapixel resolution. Its backlight compensation ensures every image captured and shown on screen is very clear. With the help of the 5x Zoom function, just zoom in to wonderfully capture every detail.

The VS7 features Bluetooth connectivity as well. The VS7 comes equipped with high-speed GPRS that connects you to the Internet with ease. Other interesting features include its clamshell design, external color screen, and changeable faceplates. The front LCD shows incoming or missed calls, even SMS. You can even read your new text messages without flipping the phone to open, simply press the scroll button to read the SMS.

For more information on Panasonic VS6 and VS7, check the website of Panasonic Mobile Communications Co Ltd at www.panasonic.co.jp/pmc/en.

Republic of the Philippines
TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
East Service Rd., South Superhighway, Taguig, Metro Manila

Resolution No. 2005-18

APPROVING THE PROVISIONAL ASSESSMENT FEES BY QUALIFICATION

WHEREAS, during the 46th TESDA Board Meeting held last 19 May 2005 TESDA Board members approved Board Resolution No. 2005-07 "The Adoption of the Guidelines in the Implementation of the Philippine TVET Qualification and Certification System;

WHEREAS, Section 7 of the Guidelines in the Implementation of the Philippine TVET Qualification and Certification Systems provides that "Assessment fees shall be based on the cost of supplies and materials as well as administrative expenses including assessor's honoraria, power and utilities, depreciation and maintenance costs. Assessment Fees shall be subject to change to allow for any possible adjustments due to costs increases;"

WHEREAS, during the 11th Finance TESDA Board-TESDA Secretariat Consultation Meeting which was held 14 October 2005, the cost of Assessment Fees by Qualification were deliberated and favorably recommended for consideration of the EXCOM-TESDA Board;

WHEREAS, during the 44th EXCOM-TESDA Board Meeting held 27 October 2005 the EXCOM-TESDA Board endorsed favorably the list of assessment fees by qualification for a period of six (6) months pilot implementation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Board approves the provisional assessment fees by qualification for a period of six (6) months subject to evaluation of its pilot implementation and submission of its findings and recommendations;

BE IT RESOLVED FINALLY, that copies of the Resolution hard and soft copies of Provisional Assessment Fees by Qualification schedule be disseminated to all concerned.

Adopted this 10th day of November 2005.

(Sgd.) MR. ELMER K. TALAVERA
Executive Director, Planning Office
Officer-In-Charge, TESDA Board Secretariat

Attested by:

(Sgd.) SECRETARY AUGUSTO BOBOY SYJUCO
Alternate Chair, TESDA Board
Director General, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority

(Sgd.) SECRETARY PATRICIA A. STO. TOMAS
Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)
Chair, TESDA Board

(PDI-March 19 & 20, 2006)



Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

PROJECT	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
Hiring of Services of an Event Agency/ Communications Outfit to handle the DBP SLDP Logistics Race Promotions Program to boost tourism through the use of the country's Road Roll-on Roll-off (RoRo) Terminal System	P 3,000,000.00
	SOURCE OF FUND: DBP FUNDS

*Bids received in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

Contract Begins: May 2006
Schedule of Activities:

Particulars	Date	Venue
Submission and Opening of Letter of Intent (LOI) and Eligibility Requirement Documents (Prospective Bidders are encouraged to attend the Opening of Eligibility Requirements Documents)	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of March 27, 2006 (Monday)	BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Issuance of Bid Data Sheet/Terms of Reference	March 28-29, 2006	BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Pre-Bidding Conference	March 29, 2006 (Wednesday) at 9:00 a.m.	OPS Conference Room, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal of Eligible Consultants/Bidders	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of April 10, 2006 (Monday)	BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Technical Proposal (Eligible Bidders are encouraged to attend the Opening of Technical Proposals)	April 10, 2006 (Monday) at 9:30 a.m.	OPS Conference Room, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens of organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. Only those that are eligible will be allowed to submit bids.

The contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during the post-qualification. Interested parties may secure the Eligibility Requirement Forms from the BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City or you may download these forms at www.devbankphil.com.ph and at the Electronic Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management. A non-refundable fee of Php1,000.00 will be charged to all eligible bidders. Quality Based Evaluation/Selection (QBE/QBS) method of evaluation will be used in the evaluation of proposals. The criteria and rating for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Terms of Reference (TOR).

*The Bank reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call telephone numbers 8125702 / 8189511 loc. 2610.

Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-March 14 & 20, 2006)

STANDARD CHARTERED BANK, PLDT INK CONTRACT

Standard Chartered Bank, the first operating foreign bank and the second longest established bank in the Philippines, recently signed a contract with PLDT for various corporate products and services. Shown seated from left are Nerissa Ramos, PLDT FVP and head of corporate business solutions; Ernesto Alberto, PLDT SVP and head of corporate business group; Eugene Ellis,

Standard Chartered Bank chief executive officer and Nilda Causing, Standard Chartered Bank country operating officer. Standing, from left, are Ginny Tacoloy, PLDT relationship manager; Katrina Luna-Abelarde, PLDT AVP and business head; Rufino Villaluna, Standard Chartered Bank country technology manager and Dave Medel, Standard Chartered Bank IT AVP.

AMENDMENT TO THE AMENDED MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT DATED FEBRUARY 14, 2006 DEFINING THE GUIDELINES ON TRANSFERABILITY OF TAX CREDIT CERTIFICATES ISSUED UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 226, THE OMNIBUS INVESTMENT CODE

Pursuant to Section 9 of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dated October 13, 2000 executed by and between the Board of Investments (BOI) and the Department of Finance (DOF) in compliance with the provision of Article 21 of Executive Order No. 226 (E.O. 226) regarding the transferability of tax credit certificates (TCCs) issued under the said E.O., the following additional guidelines are hereby adopted:

"1. Transfers by companies belonging to a distressed industry sector:

Transferors belonging to an industry sector which BOI has assessed to be in distress shall be allowed to transfer their outstanding TCCs to any BOI registered transferees and government financial institutions without requiring them to comply with the conditions imposed under Section 1c, 1e and 1f of the prevailing MOA, provided that this type of transfer shall be allowed for one year only from official notification to the Center by BOI that the industry sector is in distress, without prejudice to renewal thereof upon approval by the Executive Committee."

"2. Section 9 of the MOA is hereby amended to include the following paragraph:

"Henceforth, in order to simplify the administrative process in amending the existing MOA, and since BOI and DOF are well represented in the Center's Excom, any amendment to the prevailing MOA including exceptions to the guidelines for meritorious consideration shall now be done through a resolution duly approved by the Center's Executive Committee which resolution shall be for implementation without the need for another MOA between BOI and DOF, subject to compliance with the provisions of EO 226 and with the required administrative procedures under the Administrative Code."

(Sgd.) PETER B. FAVILA
Secretary
Department of Trade & Industry

(Sgd.) MARGARITO B. TEVES
Secretary
Department of Finance

Signed in the presence of:

(Sgd.) ELMER C. HERNANDEZ
Undersecretary
Board of Investments

(Sgd.) GAUDENCIO A. MENDOZA, JR.
Undersecretary
DSS-CENTER

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION } S.S.
CITY OF MANILA }

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 09 day of MARCH, 2006 in the City of Manila, affiants exhibited to me their Community Tax Certificates as follows:

NAMES	CTC Number	ISSUED AT	ISSUED ON
MARGARITO B. TEVES	14026438	Manila	8-02-05
PETER B. FAVILA	20564958	Makati	2-24-06

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal for the day, year, and place above written.

(Sgd.) ATTY. JOAQUIN M. CHUA
NOTARY PUBLIC MANILA
COMMISSION EXPIRES-DEC. 31, 2006
P.T.R. NO. 3721596-1-31-05 M.L.A.
ROLL OF ATTORNEY NO. 25202
IBP O.R. NO. 595079-1-25-05

(PDI - March 13, 20 & 27, 2006)



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Education
REGIONAL OFFICE NO. VIII
Government Center, Candahug, Palo, Leyte



INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education, Regional Office No. VIII through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

CLUSTER NUMBER	Name of Contract	Location	Approved Budget for the Contract	Contract Duration
Cluster I	1) Completion of School Buildings (2nd Phase)	Catarman Sped Center, Catarman, N. Samar	965,000.00	180 CD
	2) Construction of 2 classroom sch. bldg. (7m x 9m)	Maydolong NHS Maydolong, E. Samar	1,544,000.00	
TOTAL			2,509,000.00	
Cluster II	1) Construction of 2 cl School Bldg. (7m x 9m)	Ybañez ES Tabango, Leyte	772,000.00	180 CD
	2) Construction of 2 cl School Bldg. (7m x 9m)	Villaba Comprehensive NHS	772,000.00	
	3) Construction of 2 cl School Bldg. (7m x 7m)	Lilo-og PS Masasin City	607,950.00	
TOTAL			2,151,950.00	

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Form) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bids.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) Including Application of Eligibility & Issuance of Eligibility Forms	March 28 - April 11, 2006
2. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	March 28 - April 12, 2006
3. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	April 19, 2006
4. Issuance of Bid Documents	April 20 - April 27, 2006
5. Pre-Bid Conference	May 19, 2006, 2:00 p.m.
6. Receipt and Opening of Bids	May 31, 2006, 2:00 p.m.

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility forms at DepEd RO 8, Government Center, Candahug, Palo, Leyte, upon their submission of a LOI, prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility requirements to the DepEd RO BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php3,000.00 to the DepEd RO 8 Cashier.

The DepEd RO 8 assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) ATTY. ALBERTO T. ESCOBARTE
OIC-Assistant Regional Director
BAC Chairman

(PDI-March 13 & 20, 2006)

Retention of 35% tender offer threshold sought

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE AND three business organizations have urged the Securities and Exchange Commission to retain the existing threshold on tender offers, saying a lower trigger point will create ramifications detrimental to the capital markets.

The PSE, Investment Houses Association of the Philippines, Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines, and the Bankers Association of the Philippines noted the adverse ramifications in a position paper they submitted to the SEC last week.

Under the implementing rules of the Securities Regulation Code, the threshold was set at 35 percent of the market capitalization of a listed company.

The SEC is currently reviewing the tender offer rule for a possible adjustment in the trigger point.

The PSE and the business groups, however, said a lower trigger point would drive away investors, because it would jack up the cost of stock market transac-

tions, delay the execution of these deals and expose affected investors to unnecessary risks.

Also, a lower threshold will upset PSE's plans to introduce sophisticated market instruments, thereby constricting the growth of the exchange.

The position paper was signed by PSE president and CEO Francis Lim, BAP president Cesar Virata, Finex president David Balangue and Ihap president Natividad Alejo.

A tender offer is a solicitation from a company or a third party to buy shares of a corporation for a fixed period of time usually at a premium.

The rule was aimed at protecting minority owners who may be left out, if the buyer extends the offer only to strategic partners or majority owners of a company.

The rule, thus, require the buyer to extend the offer to all stockholders of the affected company, if the level of the buyer's investment touches off a trigger point or threshold.

Slow week ahead

From page B1

picture, but the overall outlook is positive," AB Capital Securities said.

Even with a dearth of market-moving news, the composite index or PSEi rose 2 percent to 2,150 last week.

Banks hogged the spotlight last week after both chambers of Congress approved the extension of the Special Purpose Asset Vehicle act.

Investors also cheered the news that commercial lending grew 3 percent to P1.6 trillion year-on-year as of January, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

"Bank lending improves, but don't get excited," AB Capital Securities wrote in a weekly report. "The growth was a significant jump from the 0.9 percent increase registered for the month of December 2005. Bank lending is expected to remain weak to moderate over the short term."


Bank of the Philippine Islands was among the gainers last week, closing 5 percent higher at P62 a share. BPI gained on news that it revised earnings upwards after making accounting related adjustments.

Another stellar performer is Equitable PCI Bank after news that an unidentified buyer has emerged who was willing to buy the SM Group's 34 percent block at P95 a piece. EP-CIB's share price shot up 20 percent to a high of P78 last week.

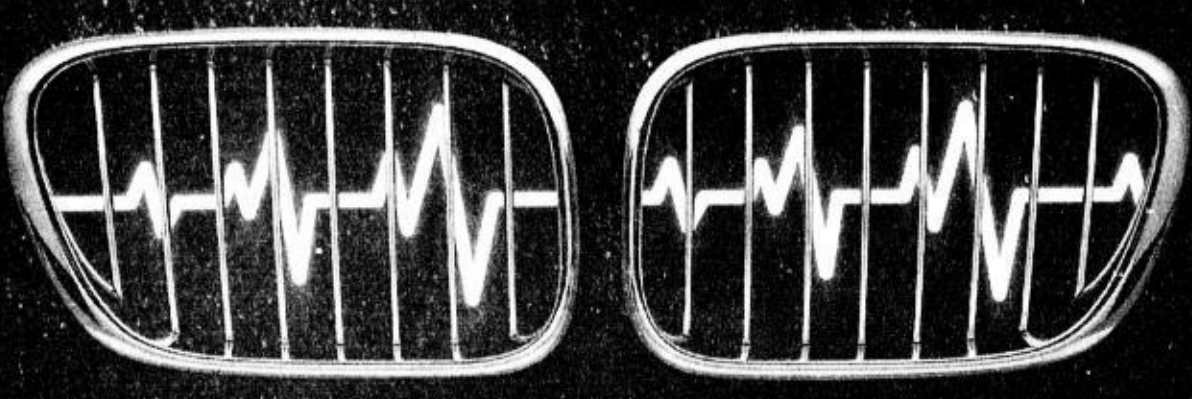
Online broker 2TradeAsia.Com meanwhile said investors may be buying ahead of second quarter corporate earnings.

"With the regression in turnover Friday, healthy breathers are likely, as the index prepares for its next rise near 2,200," 2TradeAsia.Com said in a weekly report. "Immediate support is 2,140, resistance at 2,170 to 2,180."

Elizabeth L. Sanchez



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*For PDI, ACP, Permits, 2005, Sales of 2006
**For PDI, ACP, Permits, 2005, Sales of 2006

Prestige Cars BMW 2324 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City • Tel. 892 8127 to 29

Get more from your business with the right desktop PCs

Latest Veriton model from Acer to enhance value of SOHO's businesses



Already a top-of-mind choice in the laptop PC market, Acer, one of the world's leading computer brands, makes a play for greater share of the business desktop market in the Philippines with the launch of its latest **Acer Business Desktop models**.

For those looking for the viability in their office computers, these desktop PCs have also been pre-installed with XP OS for the delivery of highly available, fully redundant IT solutions for added business value. They also come with a special upgrade option from CRT to LCD monitor (silver/black) for a minimum fee.



In line with this, Acer offers its high performance desktop --- the **Veriton 7700GX** --- an incomparable performance, branded PC, features the latest Intel® Pentium® 4 with 800 MHz FSB Hyper Threading Technology or Intel® Celeron® with 533 Mhz FSB processors comes with four DIMM slots for maximum upgradability and supporting Dual channel DDR memory. Equipped with on-board PCI-Express x16 VGA slot, users may easily upgrade the graphics for high optimum performance. The operating system runs with Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition and/or Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional.

What's more, the **Veriton 7700GX** comes with **Acer Desktop Manager, which comprises of e-Lock, e-Settings and e-Recovery to enforce, Security Manageability and Reliability with Acer LANScope** (powered by Intel® LANDesk Client Manager) and **Acer eRecovery** which protects the user's work by setting restore points, thus minimizing data loss and safe-guarding the system from OS failure and malware. For maximum security, Acer Veriton Desktop secures your company's data with its one-of-a-kind features: USB Security Lock, and Intrusion Alert: For manageability solution, its Personal Setting Migration allows user for easier and faster data transfer.

The **Veriton 7700GX** is Acer's premier commercial desktop PC known for its over-all stability, ease of deployment, and comprehensive management tools. Also, the Acer TAP (Top Access Ports) situates four USB 2.0 ports and the audio jacks on top of the **Veriton 7700GX**, giving supreme convenience.

According to Manuel Wong, General Manager of Acer Philippines, "Acer's vision is committed in empowering people and technology in making powerful, and dependable branded personal computers become more accessible for every business and household."


For more details about the **Acer Veriton 7700GX**, interested parties may call **Acer Hotline at 815-3388** or call **MSI-Digiland Philippines at 688-3333** or visit any **Acer Authorized Retail Partners** conveniently located all over the country. Visit Acer website at www.acer.com.ph.

Acer recommends Windows® XP Professional.

Power Your Business Forward

Presenting all the benefits of a stylish desktop with its space-saving system unit. The **Acer Veriton 7700GX** boasts a powerful **Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor** with 800MHz FSB, dual-channel DDR2 533 memory and contains loads of space, including seven drive bays tucked behind a cool charcoal-finish façade. For users who looks for performance, security, manageability, reliability and convenience, the **Acer Veriton 7700GX** is the answer.



Veriton 7700GX

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 631 with HT Technology (3.0GHz/2MB L2 Cache/800MHz FSB)
- Genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional
- Intel® 915G Chipset
- 512MB DDR2 RAM/80GB HDD SATA
- Intel® GMA 900 (DVMT 3.0) up to 128MB Shared Memory
- Integrated Broadcom® BCM5751 Gigabit Ethernet LAN
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SRP : 55,500
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Acer Veriton Desktops. The right tools to empower your business.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance: advanced processing with Intel® Hyper-Threading™ Technology • ample memory and storage • Security: user-defined recovery points ensures data integrity • intrusion lock and alarm for protection of components • control over data access via Acer LANScope • USBLock prevents unauthorized copying of data to USB storage devices • Manageability: Acer LANScope (powered by Intel® LANDesk Client Management) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhanced one-touch system recovery with user-defined recovery points • exceptional system management • easier user profile migration • Reliability: proven technology • integrated audio and graphics • a fully tested system • Convenience: (frontal access ports) • Acer TAP (Top Access Ports) situates four USB ports and the audio jacks
--	--

Boost after sales support for the Acer Veriton Business Desktops with the **Acer SuperCare Extended Warranty**. Uplift to a total of 3 years warranty coverage. A small investment for your absolute peace of mind.

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BUSINESS

Mindanao posts rise in foreign, domestic tourist arrivals

DAVAO CITY—DESPITE PERCEIVED SECURITY threats in the South, foreign tourist arrivals in Mindanao grew 7 percent to 141,877

last year, the Mindanao Economic Development Council (Medco) said.

Medco said in a paper presented to the media that top foreign visitors came from Japan, the United States, Korea, Malaysia and China.

If domestic tourists were included, arrivals to Mindanao grew 4 percent to 2.16 million last year.

The paper also showed a 2-percent-age-point increase in the hotel occupancy rate in the region to 49.14 percent from 47.48 percent in the previous year.

The increase in tourist arrivals last year was partly attributed to the completion of the modernization of the Davao International Airport.

Officials of the Davao International Airport said the expected continued increase in passenger traffic this year and its plan to raise fees and charges on passengers and airlines would enable it to post profit growth of as much as 400 percent this year.

The airport generated P111.19 million in revenue last year.

Michelle V. Remo

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GATEWAY
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Actual photo of Model Unit

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* CAMH Results 2005
Promo runs until March 31, 2006. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1203, Series of 2006

Where parents' money will go this June

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

Annual tuition in selected schools in Metro Manila (as of SY 2005-2006)

Compiled by PTV Research

THERE IS A DEBATE in management circles on whether or not a person should pursue an MBA.

Up until the 1980s, a master's degree in business administration was a must-have to go up the corporate ladder.

In the 1990s, the adequacy of an MBA degree to make a CEO adapt to changes in the business environment were doubted. Firms began looking for executives with entrepreneurial skills.

But this debate only affects a small segment of the population.

The concern of the majority has to do with their children's chances of completing their elementary, high school and college education.

The continuous rise of tuition fees for all segments, both public and private, has remained a major financial challenge for today's parents. And this coming school year is not likely to be an exception.

And what happened to the pre-need firms College Assurance Plan and Pacific Plans was no help to parents at all.

INQUIRER'S BusinessMonday takes a look at the cost of education in the Philippines. The rates on the table may have changed by the time the article is printed. The final costs may also differ, depending on whether miscellaneous fees—as well as the cost of uniforms and books—are included.

Treat the figures as rough estimates that will guide you when you prepare for the new school year.

PRE-SCHOOL

Manresa School
Parañaque City
Kindergarten:
P37,000 to P38,000

Betty's Bellarmine
Kindergarten School
Makati City
P23,575

Child Learning Center
Makati City
P32,000 - P36,000

Child Star International
Makati City
P120,000 (estimate)

Beacon School
Taguig-Pateros
Source: Website
P 117,000 plus
(tuition and other fees)

San Jose Academy
Malabon
P12,621.05

Jose Rizal University
Mandaluyong
Kinder - P11,560

MSH Sisters School Marikina
Approximately P16,000

ELEMENTARY

Manresa School Parañaque City
Grade V - P44,124.80
Grade III - P 36,228.95

Colegio de San Agustin Makati City
Grade 1 - P61,646.00
Grade 6 - P66,958.00

Colegio de Sta. Rosa Makati City
Grade 1 and Grade 6, P32,846.53
(tuition)

Jose Rizal University
Mandaluyong
Grade 1 - P12,830
Grade 6 - P13,950

Lourdes School of Mandaluyong
P36,419.84

Dominican School Manila
Grade 1 - P24,000 (tuition and other fees)
Grade 6 - P29,000 (tuition and other fees)

MSH Sisters School
Marikina
o About P18,000

San Beda College
Muntinlupa
o Grade 3 - P 42,263 (tuition) and P5,140 (miscellaneous)

Dominican College
San Juan
Grade 1 - P20,688 (tuition and all other school fees)
Grade 6 - P22,312 (tuition and all other school fees)

Xavier School San Juan
Grade 1 - P 73,625 (tuition)
Grade 6 - P 64,872 (tuition)

Beacon School
Taguig-Pateros
Kinder to Grade 5 - P153,000 plus
(tuition and other fees)

HIGH SCHOOL

Notredame School
Caloocan City
4th year HS - P52,000 plus
(including books and miscellaneous)

Colegio de San Agustin Makati City
1st year HS - P 74,162
4th year HS - P76,936

Colegio de Sta. Rosa Makati City
1st year HS - P34,032.58
4th year HS - P 36,645.65

Jose Rizal University
Mandaluyong
1st Year - P16,500
4th Year - P17,660

Lourdes School of Mandaluyong
P35,047.57

San Beda College
Muntinlupa
3rd year HS - P57,000

Immaculate Heart of Mary School
Parañaque City
1st year HS - P42,795.94
4th year HS - P52,117.70

Manresa School
Parañaque City
1st year HS - P51,000

Dominican College
San Juan
1st year HS - P 26,088
4th year HS - P 29,220

Xavier School
San Juan
1st year HS - 78,164 (tuition)
4th year HS - P 82,740 (tuition)

Beacon School
Taguig-Pateros
Grade 6 to Grade 8 - P165,000
plus (tuition and other fees)

COLLEGE

*SCHOOL COST PER UNIT
ESTIMATED TUITION FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR

AMA Computer University
P760.00 P41,040.00

Ateneo de Manila University
P2,053.40 P73,922.40

Colegio de San Juan de Letran
P711.00 P29,862.00

College of the Holy Spirit, Manila
P903.91 P37,964.22

De La Salle University *P1,762.50

P95,175.00

Far Eastern University P924.00

P38,808.00

FEU - East Asia College *P972.50

P61,267.50

Lyceum of the Philippines P728.00

P29,120.00

Mapua Institute of Technology
P1,292.00 P56,848.00

Miriam College P1,290.00

P54,180.00

Philippine Women's University
P720.00 P64,800.00

Polytechnic University of the Phils.
P12.00 P504.00

San Beda College P900.00

P48,600.00

San Sebastian College P700.00

P42,000.00

St. Paul College of Quezon City
P862.05 P46,550.70

St. Scholastica's College P1,335.60

P64,108.80

Trinity College of Quezon City
P741.00 P31,122.00

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*P2,018.00 P108,972.00

University of Santo Tomas P899.20

P37,766.40

University of the East P765.00

P35,190.00

University of the Philippines Diliman
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* Average cost per unit charged
among the various rates depending
on the course

SOURCES: THE SCHOOLS' ACCOUNTING, ADMINISTRATION, MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS, REGISTRARS AND TREASURERS' OFFICES

The Entrepreneurs School of Asia is
an international college with partner-
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B.S. Business Administration with
concentrations in Family Business,
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trepreneurship

Tuition costs for Filipino nationals

Average tuition per term P42,000

Duration: 3-year program-trimester

Scholarships:

On Feb. 23, 2006, the Philippine
Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) and
the Entrepreneurs School of Asia (ESA)
launched the Gen-E Presidential
Scholarship on Entrepreneurship.
While most scholarships are either
based on academic or athletic excel-
lence, Gen-E is focused on the
individual's entrepreneurial potential.
Ten full-college scholarships and several
regional partial scholarships are being
offered to 4th year private and public
high school students who exemplify the
following entrepreneurial traits of cre-
ativity, innovativeness, risk-takers,
hard-workers, leaders and resourceful-
ness.

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Adamson University
MBA - P1,500 per unit
Ateneo Graduate School of Business
MBA - P8,000 per subject
Colegio de San Juan de Letran
MBA - P915 per unit
De La Salle University Manila
MBA/Law Program - 14 units
P35,000 plus
Asian Institute of Management
MBA program - \$12,000 / year
MM program - \$14,000 / year
Grants and scholarships are available.
The AIM Master in Entrepreneurship
program is 18 months and tuition
is asset based:
Small enterprise P1.5 million
Tuition is: P380,000
Medium enterprise P16- P60 million
Tuition is: P445,000
Large enterprise P61 million- up
Tuition is: P510,000

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Education remains an elusive dream in Luzon

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk
and Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
(First of a series)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE MONTH of March brings relief and worry to Edna Manaloto.

Her relief comes from seeing her daughter hurdle the fifth grade. But already, this 46-year-old mother of two is worrying where to get the money for next school year's expenses.

"Asadsad ke sana (I hope I could see her through)," she says, finding public elementary education "costly."

In last year's enrollment, she paid P1,200 for tuition, other fees and books. Two pairs of uniform cost P500. Shoes, bag and school supplies cost another P500.

Producing the *baon* (allowance), P30 for food and P20 for transportation, is a daily problem to Manaloto who earns a living by framing photographs.

Those sum up to P1,000 monthly or one-fourth of what she earns. Occasionally, there are school projects worth P60 at most. She shells out less than P10 for test papers.

Her goal is to send her daughter to college but the high cost of living, she adds, makes that very uncertain.

That has happened to Manaloto's son Edmar who finished only high school in 2003.

"Most of the time my daily allowance to school was only P10," Edmar says.

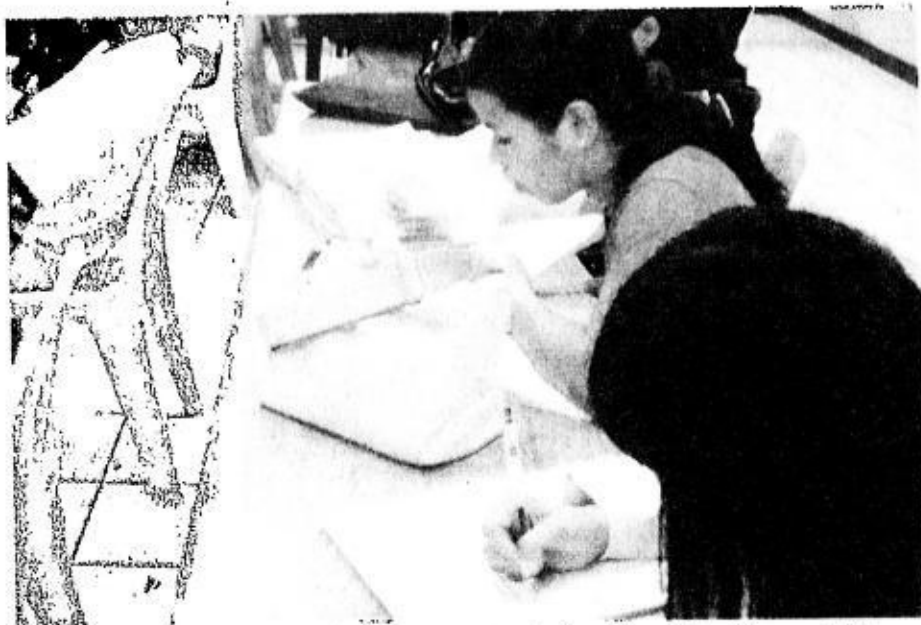
In the last three years, he has constantly looked for jobs but got none. His likes had nil chances, he points out.

On Friday, the *INQUIRER* saw him applying for a job at SM City Pampanga as a stock clerk. The giant retail firm accepts high school graduates. Edmar says he wants the job badly, which pays P260 daily, so he could help his sister finish elementary school and proceed to high school. He has not dropped his plan to enter college and intends to save some money for it.

Disturbing figures

In this Pampanga capital, Mayor Oscar Rodriguez says some figures in the education sector are "disturbing."

Of the more than 74,000 youths in the city in 2005, only 28,288 were in the elementary while 12,378 were in high school. The rest were presumed to be in



SOME college students have to work to pay for their tuition. But at the end of the day, there is no more energy left to study.

EV ESPRITU

college or out-of-school.

According to him, the trend in the city has been that only 47 out of 100 students get to complete the sixth grade but many of them fail the entrance examinations for secondary education. Of 100 students who entered high school, only 37 are able to graduate.

The poor performance landed this city's school division 15th in the Department of Education's regional ranking.

Rodriguez has retooled the city's program, making education the top priority in his administration's eight-point agenda. The day care system and health and nutrition programs have been integrated in the education program.

On top of the P100-million loan being obtained from the Land Bank of the Philippines to decongest the classrooms, the city government has also increased the special education fund from real property tax collections from P27.5 million in 2004 to P41.4 million in 2005.

Tough task

"There is no other way to make education accessible to many young people except by helping improve their health and nutrition, increasing the number of teachers, upgrading their salaries, putting in more educational infrastructures and making jobs available to par-

ents," Rodriguez says.

Jeepney driver Ernal Aquino says it is every parent's obligation to give his or her children education. But this, he points out, is a tough task nowadays.

"*Marririndi ku* (It's troubling me)," he says.

His eldest child, now a first year student at a public high school, spends P80 daily for allowance. His youngest, enrolled in fourth grade at a public elementary school here, gets P30. That leaves Aquino with less than P300 to spend for the family's three meals and other expenses.

Enrollment last year saw him forking out P5,000 for the two children, requiring him to spend 18 hours or six hours more than his regular time on the road.

"*Pilitan ku lang apayari, gang gumapang ku king ulad* (I will exert my best to make them reach college, even if I have to crawl on rat-infested grounds)," says Aquino, a single parent.

Because education was unaffordable to her family, Jessmay Peña, 20, dropped out of her computer science course in 2001 while she was just in first year.

While tuition was high enough, at about P300 per unit at the time, books, supplies, transportation and uniform and other school expenses were too much to bear for her single mother.

"Poverty really is a hindrance in getting

an education," she says.

She tried sustaining her education by working in a fast food restaurant. At the end of the day, however, she has no more energy left to study.

Out of reach

Data from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) indicated that college education is not within the reach of poor families in Central Luzon.

A partial list in 2004 showed that subjects cost from a low of P105 to a high of P750 per unit. A university charged not less than P25,000 per semester.

In 2005, the courses that attract many enrollees were nursing (from 29,240 to 40,620), business education (34,205), teacher education (28,219), engineering (22,491) and information technology (18,495).

At least 147 of 164 universities and colleges in Central Luzon are privately owned. Only 13 are funded and managed by the government.

As of March 10 this year, at least 41 schools have applied for three to 20 percent increase in tuition and other fees.

In the Cordillera

The CHED and the Department of Education acknowledge that a strong peso and the resulting 7.6 percent inflation rate warrant an increase in fees for schools in the Cordillera.

Nine major colleges have notified CHED of fee increases that range from 3 percent to 17.85 percent. Saint Louis University in Baguio City is seeking a 17 percent hike and has confronted protests from students who object to various expenses such as a mandatory Internet card that is designed to access the school's electronic library.

The immediate impact will be a reduction in enrolment, says Dr. Raymundo Rovillos, convenor for ethnicity and gender studies at the University of the Philippines Baguio.

But he says the toll will fall on indigenous peoples' (IPs) communities that are striving to access mainstream education to land better jobs.

Rovillos was commissioned by former Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus to determine the impact of the teaching system on indigenous Filipinos. His study results proved that many schools

continued to discriminate IPs, discouraging many from pursuing school.

Indigenous Filipinos from Benguet, Mt. Province, Ifugao, Kalinga, Apayao and Abra represent a quarter of the 15,000 transient students who live in Baguio at the start of school term each year.

The large student population has helped the city earn its reputation as a "university town" in the North, drawing P20 million to P60 million in expansion investments every two years, according to school officials.

Baguio's economy thrives more from the consumption of its transient students than from tourists, city planners say.

In the Cordillera, the National Statistical Coordination Board recorded 185,020 enrollees in elementary schools and 69,628 enrollees at provincial high schools last year.

"[The UP Kasarian gender program] just had a workshop for indigenous women... who again addressed the high dropout rate among elementary school children. Not that there are no schools, but even in barangays, indigenous children find it more and more difficult to cope in school because accepted textbooks and curriculums malign their ethnicity," Rovillos says.

Poverty is still a fundamental deterrent to pursuing education, he says. "They don't have clothes. They don't have anything decent or clean to wear everyday to school."

"They also have to travel far to reach school. The distance makes travel expensive," he adds.

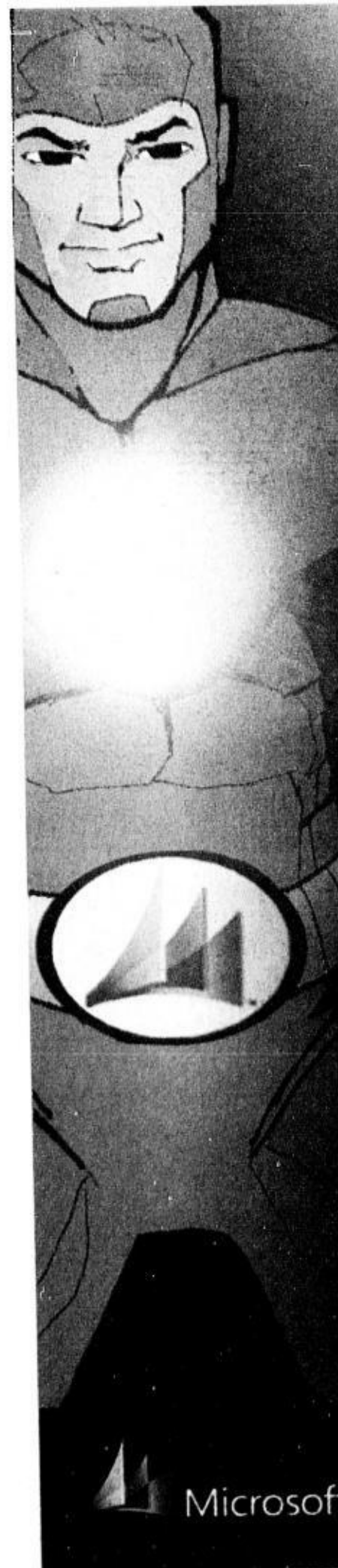
Margarita Jasmin, CHED Cordillera director, said private educators have started to penetrate the provincial market because of the growth in Baguio City.

Kalinga, which is a 12-hour ride from Baguio, has its own year-old nursing course at the Saint Toni's College.

Jasmin says Baguio's top courses are still nursing, information technology and education because of reports that the United States requires two million overseas Math and science teachers, and the constant demand in Europe for Filipino nurses.

Leon Dacanay, assistant director of the National Economic and Development Authority in the Cordillera, says the regional development council (RDC) has been pushing for a development strategy that defines the region as a center of education in Northern Luzon.

(To be continued.)



Martin Lorenzo

Chairman and CEO,
Pancake House
as RING FORCE

Industry: Food

Business Challenge: Handle the volume of information and transactions across Pancake House, Inc.'s multiple brands and branches

Secret Weapon: Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting

Sidekick: Infosoft International Solutions, Inc.

"Pancake House, Inc. focuses on acquiring underdeveloped brands that have the potential to grow, and building them to become the top-of-mind choice for casual fine dining. Over the past five years, we have experienced average annual revenue growth of 68 percent managing three brands that altogether have 93 branches across the country. It suddenly became imperative to use an accounting solution that was both powerful and scalable to handle the volume of financial transactions for all 60 branches of Pancake House, 11 branches of Teriyaki Boy, and 22 branches of Dencio's nationwide and our choice was Microsoft Dynamics."



Louie Gutierrez

Managing Director,
Silverworks
as SILVERSTREAK

Industry: Jewelry

Business Challenge: Stay ahead of the competition in terms of product, marketing, and operations

Secret Weapon: Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting

Sidekick: Global Implementation Services, Inc.

"Silverworks not only introduced silver jewelry into the mainstream almost 15 years ago, but has developed a steady market demand for this now popular type of jewelry. Naturally, competition has increased so we ensure that we stay ahead of the competition in three respects — our products, our brand, and our operations. We come up with more new product designs in a week than other companies do in a month, and we engage in tri-media advertising. We have also invested in Microsoft's sophisticated accounting tool to maximize operational efficiencies across Silverworks' 40 branches nationwide. With all our stores wired, data and reports are always up to the minute, enabling us to quickly shift gears and adjust to changing business conditions."



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Strict rules on foundations

UNTIL TWO YEARS AGO, REGISTERING non-stock, non-profit organizations as foundations was a breeze.

Foundations are non-stock, non-profit corporations that are organized primarily to extend grants or endowments to people in need of financial assistance.

The standard minimum requirement on capitalization for stock corporations was applied to foundations.

Unless something material was omitted in the corporate papers, it didn't take more than a week for a corporation to earn the right to add the word "Foundation" in its corporate name.

That word has a certain ring that adds prestige or stature to the company that bears it. It gives the impression that the organization and people behind it are "missionaries" of sorts who are motivated by a sincere desire to help others.

With that kind of perception, the task of soliciting monetary donations or assistance from potential donors has become easier, especially if they are based in foreign countries with liberal tax laws on charitable gift giving.

Unfortunately, some unscrupulous people have used foundations as vehicles for money laundering, illegal operation and other activities that made a mockery of the objectives for which they were organized.

Bank deposit

Today, the registration of a foundation requires clear proof of capacity to give financial grants or assistance to the proposed subject of the charitable act.

The organizers of the foundation must deposit at least P1 million in a bank as seed money or capital. That amount, which should be covered by a certificate of bank deposit, has to stay in the bank until the registration is completed and the foundation becomes operational.

Although bank certificates enjoy the presumption of validity, the Securities and Exchange Commission, for good measure, verifies their authenticity from their indicated sources.

A bank that is found to have issued a false certificate stands to be blacklisted in the roster of banks whose certificates can be accepted for purposes of corporate registration.

Worse, it shall be reported to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for investigation and, if warranted, the imposition of appropriate disciplinary action.

And the bank employee responsible for the forged document and the person who included it in the application for registration could face falsification of commercial documents charges.

Provisional

The P1-million requirement is not aimed at dampening the enthusiasm of civic-minded

Corporate Securities Info

Raul Palabrica

people who want to form a corporation to accomplish some charitable or social objectives.

For a lesser amount, depending on the cost of the planned projects, they can form a non-stock, non-profit corporation for that purpose.

The corporation can do anything that a foundation can do, except put the word "Foundation" in its corporate name.

Even without that label, the corporation may, if its articles of incorporation and by-laws permit it, solicit monetary donations and other forms of material assistance from third parties to help it accomplish its goals.

Later, when the corporation is able to raise the P1 million, it can apply for the amendment of its corporate papers to enable it to enjoy the rights and privileges of a foundation, including the use of the "F" word.

Incidentally, the SEC may reduce the amount of the deposit if there are meritorious reasons to justify the reduction.

It is also essential that the corporation seeking registration as a foundation submit a plan of operation stating the following:

- Its mode of operation,
- Sources of funds,
- Proposed application of those funds, and
- Prospective beneficiaries of its grants or endowments.

Exemptions

The interest in organizing foundations may be attributed in part to the perception that they enjoy certain tax privileges that other corporations cannot avail of.

True, foundations can be exempted from the payment of income tax from revenues earned in their operation and that donations to them by third parties can be excused from the payment of the donor's tax.

But these tax perks are not automatic, or come as a matter of course upon the issuance of the certificate of registration as a foundation.

They have to be applied for and approved by the Bureau of Internal Revenue. And getting that approval is not easy.

Because taxes are considered the lifeblood of government and therefore tax exemptions are strictly construed against the party claiming it, the applicant-foundation must prove to the satisfaction of the BIR that, based on its track record, it deserves to be treated differently in the payment of taxes. For feedback, please write to rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

I VIVIDLY REMEMBER A CONVERSATION I had many years ago in 1974, which marked a turning point in my leadership journey.

I was sitting at a Holiday Inn with my friend, Kurt Campmeyer, when he asked me if I had a personal growth plan. I didn't. In fact, I didn't even know you were supposed to have one.

Up until that point, the best term for my growth would be "accidental growth." I didn't grow on purpose, but I loved people and worked hard so that I caught a few things along the way.

That night with Kurt, I realized that to grow like I wanted, my personal development couldn't be hit-and-miss. I needed to initiate and activate. I made a decision to devote myself to personal growth. I literally made personal growth my personal mission.

In my book, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, I talk about the Law of Process, which says, "Leaders develop daily, not in a day." Our natural inclination is to overestimate the event and underestimate the process. We wait for a special occasion or an intense experience to boost our growth instead of appreciating the process. In the words of my friend Kevin Myers: "Everyone is looking for a quick fix, but what they really need is fitness."

We don't mature momentarily, but over the long-term. As we continue on our quest to become more skillful as leaders, let's look at seven statements about the growth process.

1. Growth is not automatic. Paul Harvey said it best: "You can tell you're on the road to success; it's uphill all the way." You can't coast uphill. Growth doesn't happen by itself; it requires an active investment of time.

Earl Nightingale said: "If you'll spend one hour a day, every day for five years on a given subject, within five years you'll become an expert on that subject." In 1974, I made that decision—to set aside one hour a day for personal growth.

Over 30 years later, I find that the more I learn and grow, the more precious that hour is to me.

2. Growth is the great separator between those who succeed and those who do not. When I see a person beginning to separate themselves from the pack, it's almost always due to personal growth.

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell



As Bennis & Nanus say: "It is the capacity to develop and improve their skills that distinguishes leaders from followers."

When I went to college, there was no gap between me and my peers, none at all. Since 1974, I have diligently followed through on my commitment to grow an hour every day, and now the gap, in most cases, is wide.

Am I smarter than my former classmates? Not at all. Many of them danced circles around me academically. The growth factor—my long-term commitment to personal development—made the difference.

3. Growth takes time, and only time can reveal certain lessons to us. We've all heard, "Experience is the best teacher," but it never has been and never will be. Evaluated experience is the best teacher. Reflective thinking is required to turn experience into insight.

If you're a young LW subscriber without a wealth of personal experience, borrow the experience. Ask questions, listen and learn from a successful leader that has gone before you.

4. The more we grow, the more we know we need to grow. In other words, when you start developing yourself, instead of feeling wise, you'll be struck by how much you don't know.

Alvin Toffler, in *Future Shock*, once observed: "The illiterate of the future are not those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."

5. Growth equals change. To develop, we must step away from comfort and welcome fresh and challenging experiences. Growth demands a temporary surrender of security. It may mean giving up familiar but limiting patterns, safe but unrewarding work, values no longer believed in, and relationships that have lost their meaning.

6. Growth inside fuels growth outside. The highest reward of our toil is

not what we get for it, but what we become by it.

At 17, I decided to read extensively, file my favorite articles, and prepare lessons. Little did I realize that out of the simple discipline of reading, filing and preparing lessons, I would receive content, develop creativity, begin to speak, and eventually author numerous books.

7. Choose to grow in the areas of your strengths, not in the areas of your weakness. There are only four things I do well, just four, and I focus exclusively on them. I lead, communicate, create, and network. That's it.

I spend all of my time on one of those four strength zones. The secret of successful people lies in their ability to discover their strengths and to organize their life so that these strengths can be applied.

Benjamin Franklin personifies the spirit of inventiveness of the modern world. His accomplishments read like an almanac of greatness: inventor; poet; philosopher; pamphleteer; distinguished member of three national academies of science; America's first Postmaster General; founder of Philadelphia's first police force, lending library, and the academy later to become the University of Pennsylvania; founder of the first fire insurance company; delegate to the Constitutional Convention; drafter of the Declaration of Independence; one of America's most effective statesmen and ambassadors.

Yet for all of his achievements, the epitaph that Franklin wrote for himself simply reads, "Here lies the body of Ben Franklin, printer."

In honoring his humble roots as a printer's apprentice, Benjamin Franklin reveals the mystery to his greatness.

It was in the world of printing where Franklin was first exposed to new books, writers and ideas. His fame, accomplishments and accolades would never have been possible without the love of learning and habits of growth imprinted in his life during his early days as a printer.

For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, please email us at maxwell@inspire.ph or call 813-2732/03 and ask for Gina. Text MAXWELL ON to 4632 (Smart) to get daily SMS leadership insights from John Maxwell. God bless!



Precious Tabia
Finance Manager,
The British School Manila

as LADY MINERVA

Industry: Education

Business Challenge: Effectively manage the school's finances to support operations and expansion

Secret Weapon: Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting

Sidekick: STRC

"In late 1999, we looked for a powerful and sophisticated yet user friendly accounting solution in time for British School Manila's expansion to its new campus at the Fort Bonifacio. After evaluating the offerings of nine vendors, we chose Microsoft Dynamics on the basis of its functionality, scalability, cost effectiveness, as well as the level of technical support offered. Aside from all the efficiencies gained from accelerating administrative processes, the accurate reports generated by the system has helped me evaluate alternative scenarios and handle the company's finances prudently. As our student numbers have significantly increased, we have been able to forecast accurately and therefore achieve a debt free situation."



Alex Janssen Lui Co
Chief Operating Officer,
Cosmetique Asia

as CAPTAIN SLICK

Industry: Beauty products manufacturing and marketing

Business Challenge: Keeping track of distribution levels and product performance

Secret Weapon: Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting and Distribution

Sidekick: Cognitive-IT Solutions

"Cosmetique Asia is a medium-size family corporation with a very lean staff. Marketing and brand building are done by only a few hands who also do other office and management work. Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting and Distribution makes our jobs easier by efficiently handling inventories of local clients, including invoicing of our 23 distributors nationwide that carry our Silka line of products. From the inventories, it quickly generates important reports that show us which product lines and sizes are selling fast, and which ones need to be pushed. The data helps us in product development, planning the company's direction and staying competitive against stiff competition."

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Director, IABC Asia Pacific Region



Bill Crane
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Butch Jimenez
SVP-Retail Business Group
PLDT



Alan Ortiz
President & CEO
National Transmission Corp.



Benjamin Philip
President, Philippine Chamber
of the Mining Industry



Ping de Jesus
President & CEO
Manila North Tollways Corp.



Hon. Jee Robredo
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Jesus Manibis
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Communication-Playmate



Mariessa D. Vinag
Editor-Newsbreak



Business Management Consultant



Tina Pangco
President & CEO
Arcilla Enterprise
Development Consulting

BUSINESSMonday

MAP stand on the Mining Act of 1995

MAPPING THE FUTURE

OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS, WE HAVE been reading reports that two mining companies, Lafayette Mining in Rapu-Rapu, Albay and Heritage Resources and Mining Corp. in Homonhon Island, Guisan, Eastern Samar are being petitioned for closure by the local community leaders because of their role in destroying the environment and displacing communities.

Complaints similar to these have been greeting the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 from the time it was passed 10 years ago. While the constitutionality of the law was assailed before the Supreme Court in 1997, the high court subsequently ruled that the law was constitutional.

The Supreme Court decision was hailed by the local and international business community, as a boon to the economy, a boost to job creation particularly in the rural areas where it is most needed, a magnet for much-needed foreign direct investments, and a boon to the local capital market.

The ruling of its legality was expected to open the floodgates of development and help alleviate the country's fiscal problems.

Those opposed to the Mining Act mainly argue that many times in the past, the mining industry had degraded the environment, deprived communities of their traditional means of livelihood and irreparably ruined their culture.

Those opposed also say that allowing full foreign equity in mining ventures, in effect, surrenders the country's sovereignty to non-Filipinos.

While the Management Association of the Philippines acknowledges these valid concerns, the very significant economic and other benefits from the development of the mining sector should be the paramount consideration of a country plagued by poverty and large fiscal deficits.

Instead of limiting the activities of the mining sector, the government should encourage its development, while taking firm and forceful steps to prevent the regulatory shortcomings and accidents of the past.

The Mining Act already has sufficiently clear provisions to protect the environment, control pollution, rehabilitate and improve mined-out areas, and protect the rights of mining communities.

The problem is not the law as the law has

anticipated and cured the previous negative effects of mining, but the government agencies' inability to strictly and religiously enforce these provisions and institute sanctions for non-compliance or violations of the regulations.

By lifting barriers to the development and extraction of the country's mineral resources, and allowing foreign equity capital to participate, this law contributes in a major way to economic development by creating jobs, alleviating poverty, and reducing the country's trade and fiscal deficits.

The MAP, therefore, urges the private sector to support this law and assist the government in its proper and strict implementation.

The MAP, with its commitment to the theme "Call To Action: Country Above Self," is prepared to take the lead in organizing the private sector in assisting the government to properly and effectively implement the Mining Act as a patriotic duty.

It is not the MAP's intent to create and fund a body to "police and regulate" which is the mandated role of government but, the MAP, with its depth of management expertise can be a potent force in mobilizing other non-profit business organizations in providing a forum where mining issues can be discussed with all interested parties (to include mining companies, the local government, the affected communities and the church) and together arrive at solutions to specific mining issues for the optimum benefit of the Filipino people.

In addition, the MAP through its committed members, offers to assist the LGUs and affected communities in developing the monitoring and reporting mechanism for policing compliance of mining companies to their social, economic and environmental commitments under the law so that the benefits from mining can be enjoyed without the ill-effects of negligence, incompetence and apathy.

(This is the official statement of the Management Association of the Philippines on the Philippine Mining Act of 1995. The MAP secretariat may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

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Iloilo, heritage champion

ILOILO EVOKES MANY PLEASANT images, each one as soothing as its melodious language whose lilt perfectly sums up the local lifestyle and culture: laid-back Southern gentility graciously lived in a city on the banks of a river whose languorous flow sets the peaceful tone of the residents' pulse.

There is no other city in the Philippines with an image as distinct as Iloilo.

Once the center of the Visayan sugar industry, the city retains vestiges of that era. Muelle Loney, the city dock, commemorates Nicholas Loney, the Englishman who industrialized the sugar industry in the 19th century, exported sugar globally from Iloilo, and brought prosperity to the province.

There was another side to the entrepreneurial Loney who flooded the Iloilo market with cheap, machine-woven textiles imported from England, a move killing the flourishing Ilonggo hand-loom industry which was the source of the best hand-woven fabric in the Philippines.

Nevertheless, the face Iloilo presents today is still sugar-sweet. Elegant arcaded colonnades dating back to the Commonwealth era still shade city-center sidewalks, an urban amenity now vanished from other Philippine city centers in the name of development.

The Commonwealth-era buildings of Iloilo face extinction. The new malls have taken away retail activity from the old city center. There are plans to reuse the old downtown buildings to produce a heritage-destination setting that attracts the public and tourists away from the malls, a plan seen to revive the old city center and return luster to the city's tarnished pride of place.

Iloilo ilustrados

Descendants of illustrious Iloilo families continue to live in their stately homes that stand sometimes alone, at other times behind rows of commercial developments, on city streets that retain shabby remnants of its former grandeur.

Progress has swept away sidewalks, trees, and the small plazas that once made the city more livable than it is today.

Nevertheless, the city presents a wide range of architecture. Houses range from pre-20th century bahay na bato of the Spanish colonial era. In Iloilo, the houses take on a Visayan character. They are more open and embellished than their Tagalog relatives. Superb mansions from the American colonial era, built in the 1920s in an eclectic style typical to Iloilo, remain.

Probably one of the best-preserved 1930s Art Deco houses in the country is aptly called Boat House, a reference to its flowing, streamlined lines recalling sleek ocean liners considered the height of modernity during that era, causing that particular variant of the Art Deco style to be called Moderne.

Iloilo unfolds on different levels. Some mansions struggle for existence side by side with unregulated commercial development on city streets. Fast-food stores in malls fail to capture faithful customers who still insist on going to the market, not a restaurant, for an authentic batchoy fix.

Ilonggo culture tempers 21st-century mass media and Internet culture with Visayan tradition, creating an interesting mix of cutting-edge technology and the old.

With its feet firmly planted on tradition is the Panaderia de Molo, an Iloilo icon deserving to be a national treasure. Its trademark striped tins of handmade cookies are prized gifts to any Filipino. Its bakery products are coveted Pinoy comfort food that maintain the old taste and texture no longer

found in mass-manufactured products from commercial bakeries.

Established by the Jason sisters, ownership has passed to their Sanson great-granddaughters, the fourth generation of the family to manage the bakery. This generation zealously maintains original family recipes, still kneads and mixes by hand, uses traditional wooden and bamboo implements, and bakes in clay ovens fired by wood especially grown in the family's plantation.

Conservation body

Bent on preserving heritage, the Iloilo City Cultural Heritage and Conservation Council (ICCHCC) actively takes a hand in guiding the city to attaining a balance between tradition and the 21st century.

Enjoying support from City Mayor Jerry Treñas, who understands that the identity of Iloilo lies in its culture, well-connected ICCHCC board members are Iloilo movers involved in city government, civic organizations, mass media, business, professional and academic circles.

The ICCHCC is among the few organizations in the Philippines that have greatly increased heritage awareness. The organization successfully held a heritage awards program in 2005 that awarded the winners of a student essay competition and presented awards recognizing the best conservation and adaptive reuse of heritage architecture in the city.

Among its awardees were ancestral homes reused as schools, religious convents or restaurants, proof that heritage structures can be used



for contemporary needs.

In May, the ICCHCC goes into full gear. Iloilo hosts the national culminating activity for Philippine Heritage Month on May 30-31 this year.

For the entire month of May the tireless ICCHCC presents a series of activities celebrating heritage. A Flores de Mayo, exhibits of traditional culture, musical performances, lectures, and dance performances will be held in different venues all over the city.

The closing ceremonies in Iloilo City will be

ENDANGERED are the colonnaded sidewalks of downtown Iloilo, which need revival to counteract the flow of retail activity sucked away by newly constructed malls.



BAMBOO patterns in lace-like finery hallmark the Ilonggo variant of the traditional bahay kubo.

the highlight of the month-long celebration and focus on Panay cultural heritage, specifically Iloilo. During the two days, activities and events will include walking tours, park concerts, cultural performances, religious rites, and ceremonial receptions.

A good place to start an Iloilo visit would be at Museo Iloilo, whose exhibits introduce what the city is all about and whose director, Zaffy Ledesma, has an inside track on local history.

Walk next door from the Museo to the Department of Tourism Office (tel. 033-3375411) for detailed information on all cultural and tourism events sponsored either by the ICCHCC or the DOT which share an office in Iloilo City.

Feedback is welcome at afvillalon@hotmail.com

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LIFESTYLE

Rock Drilon's personal unravelings

By Lisa Ito
Contributor

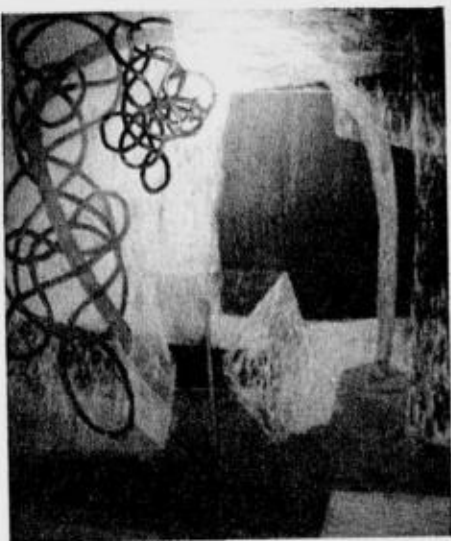
AS A VISUAL FORM AND METAPHOR, the line references energy, the flow of life and the progression of events. In Rock Drilon's recent paintings, the line and its undulations into loops, circles and masses signify a journey toward the unraveling of self.

A tracing of the lines in Drilon's works rendered in acrylic on canvas in the show "Recent Paintings" reveals a progression that, if interpreted in the light of psychological analysis, charts the unwinding and journeying of forms, perhaps the artist's unintended symbol for his internal sojourns, across an expanse of space.

"Selective Memory" is a diptych relaying Drilon's personal attempt to decipher self and lay down visual references for assessing the events of his personal life. As the title implies, the artist does not engage in a strictly chronological accounting of everything that has happened since birth, but, rather, systematically filters recollections of events that have shaped, strengthened, or scarred him through the decades.

This particular painting is Drilon's visual translation of biography-psychology, a healing technique used to draw out recurring and unresolved experiences—motifs of conflict, so to speak. But instead of recollecting the past through words, Drilon uses visual references to situate deep personal musings into context, in order to see how they fit into the entire puzzle of life.

After scribbling cathartic passages on canvas, the artist obscures the text with abstract forms, covering the entire work



"ORANGE Line"

with personal symbols.

Drilon's attempt to chart the personal may be gleaned from the main motifs of the work, which include numbers arranged beside parallel lines or planes, similar to the lines of a writing pad or the unfolding expanse of a staircase.

The undulating and sequential flow of numerals from one to 50 marks the artist's attempts at accounting for the passage of his personal life. The numbers subtly shift in hue as the numerical progression increases: from bright orange at the very start, to red, maroon, violet, blue, turquoise, and gold.

The color shifts are likewise signifiers of how the artist views each respective phase. Other forms in the work are opened and recurring loops-treading the expanse of space.

The way the lines of Drilon's paintings entangle in circular journeys speak of in-

ternal contradictions. The way the artist's forms loop in a sweeping, all-encompassing way in the work "Selective Memory," for instance, is far different from the way they all converge in other paintings in the show, such as the series titled "Untitled" 1-3.

According to the artist, these were among a series of paintings produced in Brooklyn, New York, where he stayed for a brief hiatus last year.

Situated inconspicuously at the periphery of the gallery's wall, the small-scale paintings are variations on a single image: a continuous line looped up and bunching into a single entanglement.

The tangled and winding forms in dismal hues point to literal allusions beneath the mass of convolutions. This motif is repeated in the exposed sketch lines beneath the forms, jutting out like thorns piercing the pale rose backgrounds of the works.

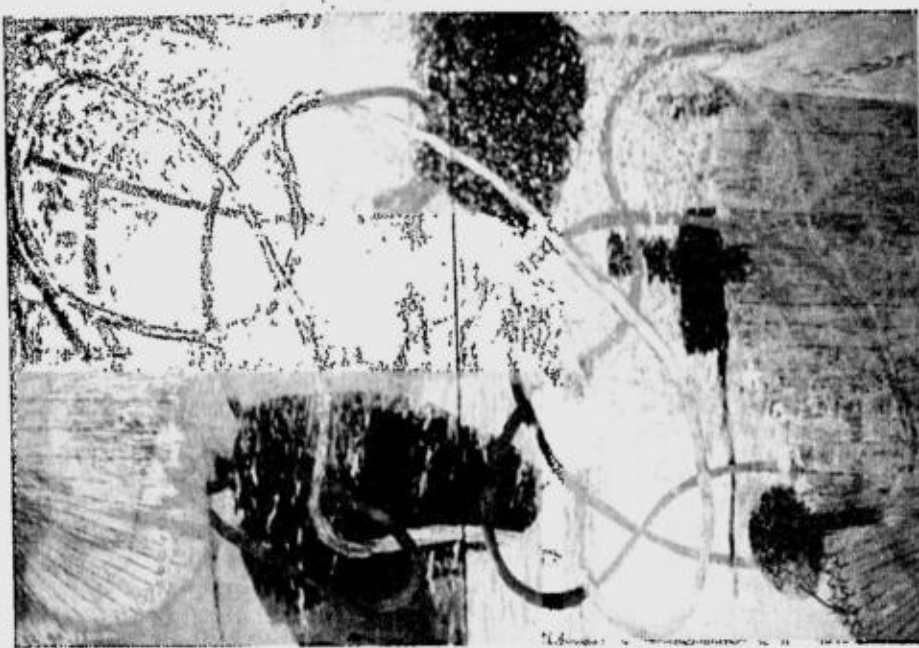
Peripheral

The rest of the paintings in the show demonstrate the artist's cognizance of the peripheral.

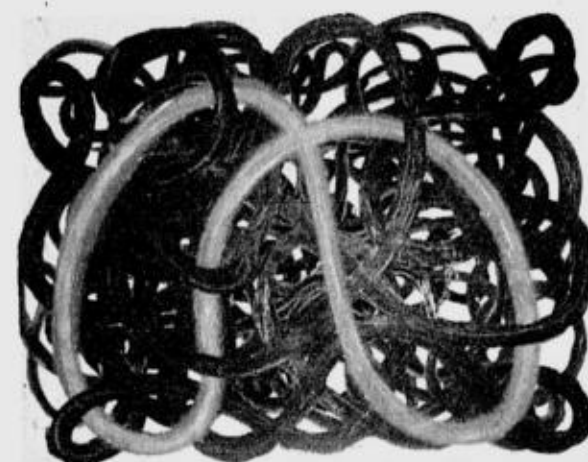
"Orange Line" derives its title from a sliver of tangerine in a sea of turquoise and milky white filling the canvas.

"Yellow Line" is a diptych which derives its title from, in a plane predominantly filled with black, gray and blue forms, a deliberate canary line that seemingly passes off as a random or an insignificant part of the complex painting.

"Red Line," similarly, reinforces the veiled irony between the title's text and the images painted on canvas. The literal referent of this work's title, too, is similarly situated at the very periphery of the



"SELECTIVE Memory"



"UNTITLED"

painting: a gaunt, vertical scarlet slash lost in a galaxy of floating and expansive forms, like a lacerated wound on the verge of bleeding.

These works, taken as a whole, are subtle reminders of formal and personal contradictions. The metaphors in "Recent Paintings," however, are deeply and intimately personal ones that may not be readily evident to viewers unacquainted with the artist.

The veneer of detachment is likewise reinforced by the straightforward and seemingly impersonal title of the show

and the simple titles of the works.

The show, after all the scrutiny, is an affirmation of how abstraction articulates the personal. It demonstrates how either the studied or spontaneous composition of forms creates concrete images of the inchoate and complex mass of subjectivities brimming beneath skin.

Rock Drilon's "Recent Paintings" is on view at Mag:net Gallery Katipunan until March 31. Call 9293191 or e-mail mag-netcafekatips@yahoo.com.ph

VISUAL ARTS

Palencia wins in Busan

JPALENCIA has been chosen one of six prizewinners in an open international competition for the 2006 Busan Biennale Sea Art Festival, which will open on Sept. 17 and runs until November in Busan, Korea. His prize-winning entry, "Ocean Dragon," figures prominently in the Biennale's theme of "Public Art," curated by Ryu Byoung Hak, and will be installed on the promenade along Heaundae Beach in Busan in July. Other winners are Subodh Kerkar of India, Alina and Jeff Blum of the US, Tet-suo Yamafuji of Japan and Art Family of Korea.

Art Discovery exhibit

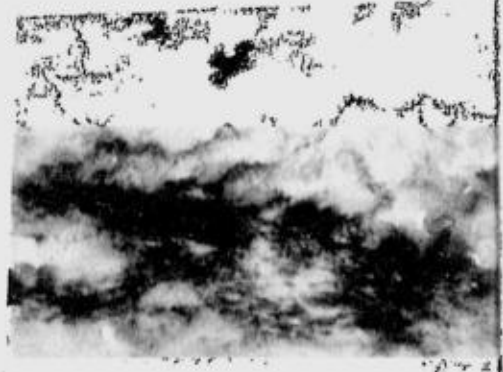
THE ART Discovery and Learning Foundation Inc. will hold a group exhibit of small works on flowers, March 20-31, at the Blooms and Foliage Inspirations, 123-A Scout Gandia cor. Scout Torillo, QC. Participating artists include Judy Lim, Dr. Lorenza Calpotura, Roger Chavez, Serena Borrás, Isabelita Maderazo, Jose Dinglasan, Ben Infante, Gaudencio Romion Jr. and Fernando B. Seña.

Women artists at Liongoren

EIGHT Filipino women artists come together in Liongoren Gallery's annual "8 Filipina," an invitational art exhibit in commemoration of Women's Month. The show will feature oil paintings, photography, installation art and digital arts by Isabel Aquilizan, Cynthia Alexander, Ligaya Fernando-Amilbansa, Hannah Liongoren, Isa Lorenzo, Lea Padilla, Teena Saulo and Rolie Yusi. The show opens on March 24 and runs until April 16 in Liongoren Gallery, 111 New York, Cubao, QC, and on April 17-23 at Galerie Y in SM Megamall.

Cordero at West

LOUIE CORDERO presents his latest one-man exhibit, "Bad Taste," March 21-April 8 in West Gallery, 48 West Ave., QC. The exhibit features familiar icons in visceral situations. It attempts to convey the artist's thought through visual juxtapositions. Call 4110336.



"UNTITLED," watercolor on Fabriano paper, by Leon Pacunayan



"OCEAN Dragon," by Joaquin Palencia

3 solos at Nineveh

NINEVEH Artspace presents three solo shows: "Batang Kalye," by Oville D.R. Tiamson of Angono, Rizal; "Musmos," by Bernard Vista of Pakil, Laguna; and "MeLaKaw," by Rey Bollozos of Toril, Davao City. The exhibits run until April 9 in Nineveh Artspace, 2452, 1st Ave., Villa Silangan, Sta. Cruz, Laguna. Call (049) 8086617 / (049) 8106315 / 0916-7720368.



"HARI," pen and ink on paper, by Rey Bollozos

Summer art workshop

THE POSITIVISM Art Gallery conducts summer art workshops starting March 25 at the Makati Cinema Square, and on April 2 at Walter Mart, Pasay Road cor. Pasong Tamo, Makati City. Registration for the seven-week program is ongoing. Call 8112432 or 0927-5522288.

Pacunayan at De las Islas

GALERIA de las Islas presents "Reminiscence with My Masterpieces," a one-man exhibit of watercolors by Leon Pacunayan. The show features works rendered in watercolor using the artist's distinctive wet on wet style. Abstract landscapes and still lifes are also included in the exhibit. The show runs until April 8. Galeria de las Islas is on 3/F, Silahis Center Building, 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. Call 5272113.

Totally woman, totally 'kikay'

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

A SHOW BY EIGHT WOMEN IS A FITTING tribute to womanhood, and more so if the artists, of widely divergent styles, have come together and bonded in art's name, sprung from the well-tended valley of Marikina.

"Kulay Kikay" (Renaissance Gallery, Artwalk, SM Megamall, March 24-31), so-called because of its allusion to the modern Filipina's fashion sense, features senior artists Remy Boquiren and Lydia Velasco, junior artists Sheila Tiangco, Armida Francisco and Lisa Villaseñor, and emergent artist Honey Banal, and sisters Chie and Chigo Cruz (Velasco's daughters).

Boquiren, in "Calla Lily Gatherer," shows her trademark maiden clad in stylish bandana and jeans, hugging a bouquet of long-stemmed lilies. With her hues in bold profusion, and her women svelte and willowy, Boquiren has clearly evolved into a colorist who has no qualms about seducing the eye.

Velasco has her usual Mother and Child figure in "Puso ng Isang Ina," shrouded in shimmering white cloth, their eyes gazing on each other with tenderly maternal affection. Surely, such a scene may now be considered de rigueur, but given the artist's proclivity for updating religious icons, the work may well liberate artists enamored with convention or tradition, coming in such sensual fashion, as only Velasco could decree.

The works of Tiangco, though encapsulated in still-life genre, are potentially alluring to the viewer. A restaurateur who dabbles in flower painting, Tiangco comes off as a realist who, like Georgia O'Keeffe, magnifies her subjects by rendering them in larger-than-life and allegorical mode.

Given her expertise with tropical blooms, these works cast a seductive and suggestive erotic presence, more so with their partly or generously exposed petals, reddish pistils to boot.

Francisco, who has worked as illustrator



"CALLA Lily Gatherer," by Remy Boquiren

and interior designer, has a festive sense of color and mirthful sensibility of composition, most evident in her attempt to render the subject of the body as primal seat of energy. She has done a lot of ethnic themes, indigenous subjects with a dose of universal mirth.

The works of Villaseñor are, of course, no less alluring, simply because they are endowed with joie de vivre, generated by her use of textures and depth. She knows her plant life amazingly well, evident in her use of tropical and garden plants growing abundantly.

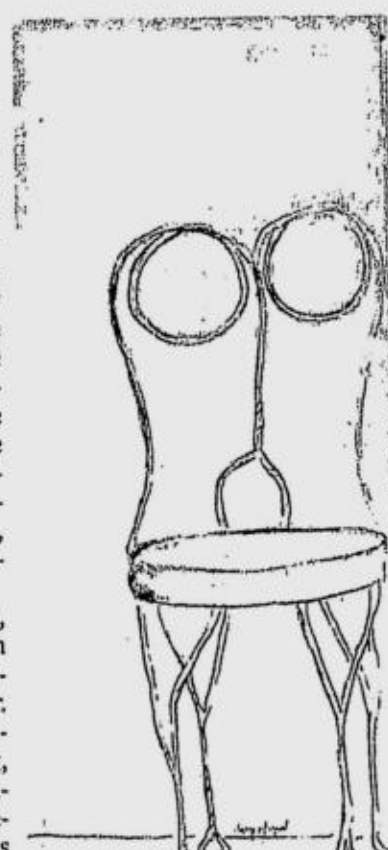
Banal, on the other hand, celebrates the banality of images with her two-level compositions, often depicting the collaborative works of children and adults. This she does by actually enlisting the scribbling of her own two kids.

In "Putting Pader," for instance, the diptych shows a two-paneled painting, the bigger part in off-white configuration, and the smaller part in darkened color, with a contrasting sharper image of the same subject.

The pieces of sisters Chie and Chigo Cruz are executed in mixed-media painting and sculpture, respectively. The latter has a quirky, irreverent and quasi-primitive painting style that works in uncharted ways, while the former works in resin and plaster of Paris to depict body parts, as in "Hope," where she has two open palms showing olive-hued leaves.

It is still too early to say where these experiments will ultimately lead to, but her derring-do coupled with unblinking view of sexuality is quite affecting, to say the least.

E-mail author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com



"BATIBOT," by Honey Banal



BY PANDY AVIADO

Aviado, Paras, Rubio at Avellana

OPENING today in Avellana Art Gallery (A-19, 2680 F.B. Harrison St., Pasay City, fronting Gideon Academy; tel. 8338357) are three simultaneous exhibits. Pandi Aviado's "Homage to Benzaite (Deity of the Artist)" features large-scale tapestries and works in acrylic on canvas that celebrate the purity of form. Lynard Arwyn Paras' "My Heart, My Plans and the Lady Who Killed My Daughter and Son" is mainly composed of portraits in oil on board and canvas that exhibit the rifts and bonds in family allegiances. And Ryan Rubio's "Melancholy of Unexpected Places" showcases an acrylic suite of haunting, ghost-like figures trapped in a derelict world.



"AFTER Boticelli: Madonna of the Magnificat," by Noli Principe Manalang

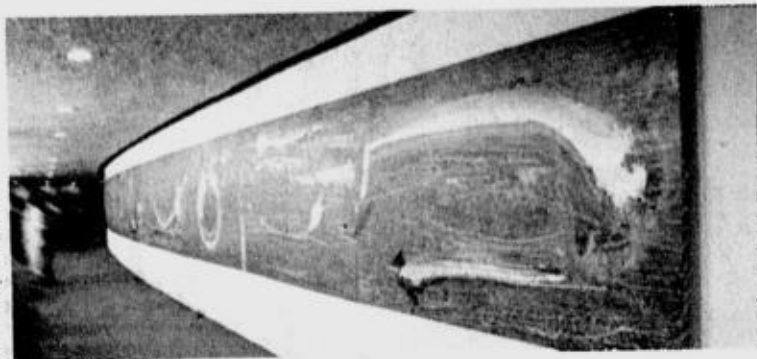
Manalang at Genesis

NOLI Principe Manalang will mount his first solo exhibit, "Ave Maria: A Homage," March 24, in Gallery Genesis (4/L, Building A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City). The exhibit features some 30 watercolor depictions of the Holy Mother. The exhibit will run until April 8. Call 6338137/8138.

'Inculcation' at National Museum

THE NATIONAL Museum is showing "Inculcation: Museum as Nation," the final leg in a series of exhibitions to prepare for the opening of the National Art Gallery. Museum director Cora Alvina will host a reception on March 22, 6 p.m. The exhibit, which runs until May 31, can be viewed on the 4/F, Museum of the Filipino People at the Teodoro Valencia Circle (formerly Agrifina), Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Call 5271215, 5243005 and 5270278.

MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2006



AMAN and his artistic gigantism

An artist creating his own reality

By Constantino C. Tejero

AMANDO SANTOS III'S LATEST WORK is a sight to behold. Called "Event Space" and rendered in oil on canvas, it is a 10-panel piece of artistic gigantism.

This is displayed as a mural in the artist's 11th exhibit until March 26 in the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. The single canvas expands to some 5 ft in width and 80 ft in length running along the wall of Pasilyo Vicente Manansala (2/F Hallway).

The young artist, who signs his works simply "Aman," explains: "The long stretch of canvas allows me to create brushstrokes varying in length, size, gravity, violence, texture and movement."

The piece is technically composed of 10 canvases placed side by side on which are broadly applied brushstrokes of red, yellow, orange, white, gray, light blue and yellow-green on a plane of earth-brown.

The brushstrokes—a single stroke or two on each panel—range from circular to arching, peaking, undulating. Seen as a unit, they give the impression of one long disrupted movement.

Says the artist: "A brushstroke applied on the canvas travels for a certain distance in space and time. These strokes vary depending on the applicator used and how much pigment it contains, or the manner and force with which they are applied on the canvas surface."

Aman's method is simple enough, it is the result that appears hard to comprehend. It's like the artist is foisting a game, presenting a jigsaw puzzle to the viewer, or playing with a law of physics.

First, he covered the long canvas with a scratchy color field embellished with giant brushstrokes. Then he fragmented the canvas into 10 equal parts. Finally, he rearranged the parts to break the strokes' visual and physical continuity.

So what does he want to achieve with the disarrangement?

"Once the pieces are joined together in a manipulated sequence, the brushstrokes offer a different visual account on these disjointed spatial indicators as our eyes follow their new course," the artist slyly explains. "It shows possible definitions of events, space and, ultimately, time—as a moment, departing from real time, which escapes the viewer's default knowledge



of time's entropic character."

That is, of course, Darwin's theory of relativity here applied on an artwork. Who would have thought something like that was practicable in painting?

The exhibition note elaborates: "The work seeks to contribute to the many possibilities of testing the concepts of space-time as presented in the field of physics. This examination into the broad dimension of physics as a contextual ap-

proach to art-making can be a considerable source for critical visual methodology and creative production, as in the case of art theories in semiotics, memory, power. This exhibit is a validation of the artist's chance to create his own reality through his artwork."

It is not surprising then to learn that Aman is taking up his Master of Fine Arts at the University of the Philippines, hotbed of such recondite ideas.

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- Rosanna Ocampo, a 46-year-old housewife, Pynocare user of 4 weeks

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- Joyce Fukuda, a 44-year-old golfer, Pynocare user of 4 weeks

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- Adela Pascolan, a 34-year-old Assistant Branch Manager, Pynocare user of 3 months

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- Jenny Chua Chan, a 48-year-old Bank Employee and Pynocare user of 3 months



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Familiarity breeds contemplation

By Jessica Jalandoni-Robillos
Contributor

RIGHT AFTER EARNING HER FINE Arts degree at the College of the Holy Spirit where she majored in Art Education, Rona Buenaseda became Onie Chua and settled down to have three children. It would take eight years before she would put her degree to use, applying as an art teacher at the Immaculate Conception Academy. She only taught there for a year, though, because of maternal duties.

Unwilling to give up teaching, Rona decided to offer art classes and began with one student in her garage in San Juan. By giving out flyers, the number of enrollees grew and she now also holds classes in Makati. The ages of her pupils range from 7 to 60 years old, and she only allows a maximum of 10 per class, careful to give each student sufficient attention.

She is keen on urging youngsters to explore their artistic inclinations, recalling how her parents were very supportive of her own learning. She tells of how they fondly remember her constant doodling even before she learned to write. Throughout her elementary and high school years at Assumption College and also while her kids grew, Rona turned to sketching.

Nowadays her sketches serve as studies for works in watercolor, acrylic, and oil. Her first solo exhibit featured only watercolor pieces, but as she has reacquainted herself with oil, she finds she is enjoying her work even more.

Her second show is "Seeing Through Color" at the Crucible Gallery (4/L, SM Megamall; tel. 6356061), March 21-April 2, presenting pieces that are pretty and feminine, very much like the artist herself.

Although in this age it may be inaccurate to say that floral arrangements, food and gardens are distinct womanly preoccupations, the notion seems apt for Rona Chua, since it applies both in her paintings and her being a homemaker.

Tranquility

New in this collection are serene landscapes, some inspired by pictures, some by



"UNDER the April Sun"

imagination. It seems, though, that the inclusion of garden chairs and an empty wooden boat indicate a personal want for tranquility—the artist being a mother/wife/teacher must somehow yearn for quiet time.

"Under the April Sun," for instance, echoes the constant wish of every busy mom for solitude, to hie off alone as a break from wifely duties and domesticity in general.

Which is not to say that Rona pines for a certain refuge. In fact, she says she is at peace and happiest when she is painting while listening to classical music.

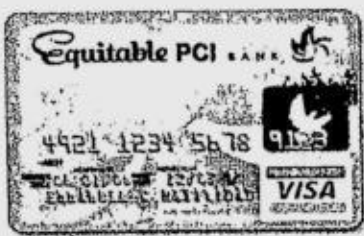
This contentment is evident in her works, such as her florals surrounded by a dreamlike aura. The pieces are best experienced firsthand, because the ethereal detail do not show in pictures.

This outing, in fact, allows viewers to see through Rona Chua—in choosing to render the ever-familiar still life, she allows viewers a peek into her charmed life, one with loving husband and children she dotes on, who support her in return.

Hers is art borne of sheer, simple joy, speaking of fulfillment and fulfillment itself in its creation.

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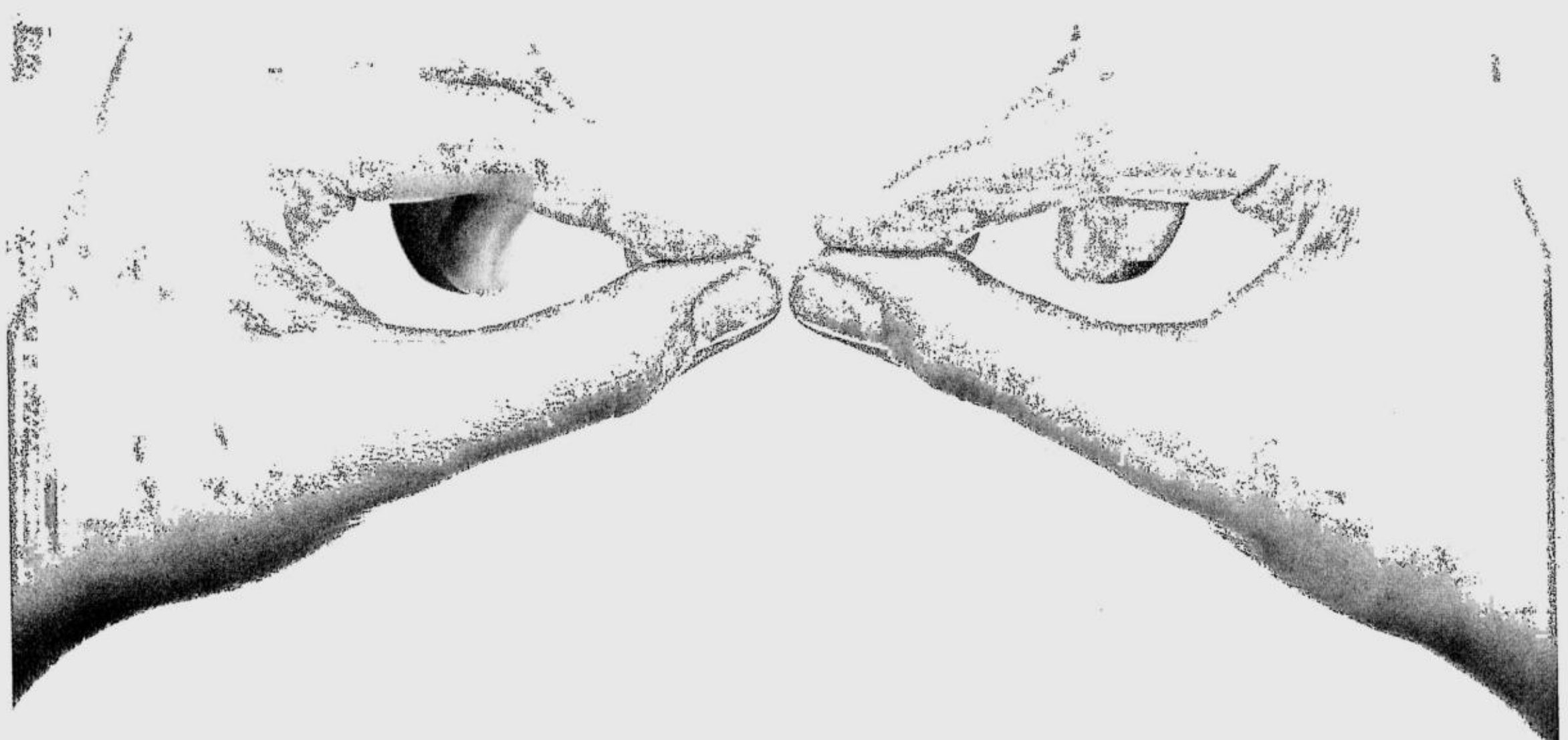
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YELLOW PAGES

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

MAESTRA DALISAY ALDABA, the last great Filipina Madama Butterfly, was laid to rest last Wednesday to the strains of Puccini's "Un bel di" (sang with dramatic fervor by UP student Deeda Barreto) at the Santuario Chapel in Forbes Park.

A few months back, her equally illustrious sister, Estefania Aldaba Lim (who had passed away a mere two weeks earlier before Maestra) had asked me, "Pablo, you know the career of my sister, Dalisay? Don't you think she deserves to be National Artist?"

I said the honor was long overdue but the bureaucracy which still controls the leading cultural institutions has a strange way of working in this country.

Award-giving bodies only think of giving artists their long-overdue recognition only when they are already dead. The research groups working for these awards committees only work during awards season and don't really monitor artists who devoted an entire life to their art.

(I remember a cultural institution giving last-minute tribute to Zeneida Amador only in her deathbed.)

To those who didn't know Maestra Aldaba well, she is simply the last of the great Filipino Madama Butterflies and her passing away signals the end of an opera era in the country. She followed the illustrious trail of the country's first distinguished Cio Cio San—Isang Tapales and Jovita Fuentes. The first died without a decent tribute from the CCP or any cultural organization but the latter became National Artist.

Aldaba didn't stop even after her performing days were over. She taught, she founded the Opera Guild of the Philippines, and was laid to rest without a single representative from CCP and NCCA paying tribute to her in the Requiem Mass.

It was the same act of indifference I saw in the wake of Maestra Isang Tapales and Maestra Mercedes Matias Santiago (the country's first Lucia di Lammermoor).

Aldaba debuted in Madama Butterfly in the late '40s at the New York City Opera and reprised it in Philadelphia, Washington DC, and later in Spain (Oviedo) and France (Lyon, Nice, Marseilles).

The eminent Paul Hume reviewed Aldaba's Washington debut: "Miss Aldaba proved one of the finest singers to take on the role in the city. Her appearance is perfect for the part and she adds to it an ease and engaging stage manner that carried her through the unusually long role with no difficulty. Her voice is small but beautifully produced. It carried well and sounded as full as the larger voices with which it was matched. She won an ovation after her big Second Act aria."

As I reviewed the country's illustrious array of first-rate performing artists, none of them (except for Jovita Fuentes)—from violinist Carmencita Lozada, soprano Evelyn Mandac and pianist Cecile Licad—will ever get to be National Artists until their careers are long over.

Tribute to Redentor Romero

Another person who devoted an entire life to enriching the country's cultural life was the late violinist-conductor Redentor Romero. He brought first-rate artists to the countryside and I met first-rate instrumentalists and singers (from Nelly Miricioiu to Alexandru Tomescu) through him.

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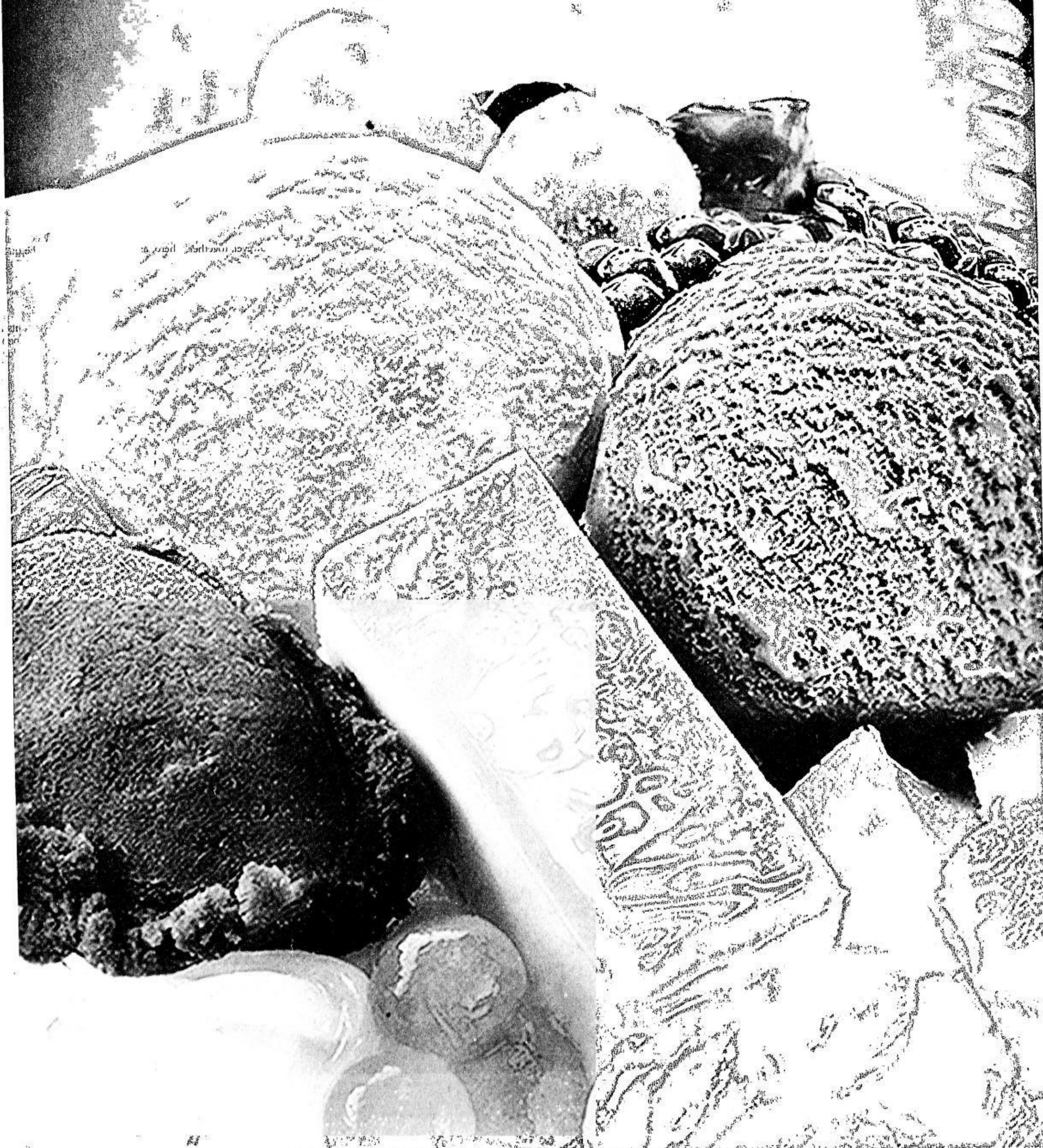
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Seven thespians on one stage

By Joel Trinidad
Contributor

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES' newest production, "7 ng Umaga," the nine-member cast of which I am a humble part, is a Philippine adaptation (in English) of Paul Osborn's highly acclaimed Broadway drama "Morning's at Seven."

This play is something of a Repertory Philippines homecoming for us, a "new beginning" for a lot of venerable theater veterans whose acting experience, taken together, clocks a staggering 200-plus years!

Here, in alphabetical order, are the nine returning Rep actors of "7 ng Umaga."

Tony Amador (first Rep show: "Miss Julie," 1967). Tito Tony has performed with several the-

ater groups here and abroad. He is the brother of Rep's late great co-founder Zeneida "Tita Bibot" Amador, who directed him in the first-ever Rep production. He took a break from Rep shortly after that, citing creative differences with the director in the form of her hitting him on the head a lot.

Baby Barredo (co-founder, Repertory Philippines). Who hasn't heard of Baby Barredo? A graduate of the prestigious Juilliard School in New York, Tita Baby has performed in and directed literally hundreds of plays in several countries. This, however, is her first time to direct a play and star in it at the same time. Thus, she is the only member of the cast the director has not yelled at.

Liesl Batucan (first Rep show: "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," 1993).

Liesl was working in Sycip, Gorres and Velayo as a corporate finance consultant when she attended a Rep audition and was instantly hired. These days, this immensely talented artist spends most of her time acting, singing and assistant-directing.

Miguel Faustmann (first Rep show: "Hello, Dolly," 1974). An architect by profession, this Austrian-Spanish 1985 Aliw awardee is also a director, set designer, voice talent and commercial model. Interestingly, while many of us have struggled to use unaccented English for this adaptation, Miguel has had no trouble at all sounding completely and authentically Filipino.

Jay Valencia-Glorioso (first Rep show: "Les Misérables," 1993). Jay is one of the founders (with Karla Gutierrez, Nelyn Cabahug, and several others) of POC, or the Philippine Opera Company. But she is actually a dancer by training. Not only has she trained with Filipinescas, she was also a dance scholar under the highly respected Tita Radaic.

Enchang Kaimo (first Rep show: "Lysistrata," 1968). A former drama student of Tita Bibot and Tita Baby at St. Joseph's, Enchang was a Rep actor before there even was a Rep. Though En-



THE CAST of Repertory Philippines' "7 ng Umaga," an adaptation of Paul Osborn's "Morning's at Seven"

chang first joined Rep as a stage manager/usherette/ticket seller/sandwich maker, Tita Bibot and Tita Baby kept collaring her and forcing her to step in whenever some actor got sick or fired. The rest is history.

Joel Trinidad (first Rep show: "Kismet," 1989). Joel is an actor, a voice talent, a commercial model, an acting coach, an improv comedian, an English teacher, a lyricist, and a dazzling playwright who is funny, talented, handsome,

and also smart enough to have volunteered to write this article.

Joy Virata (first Rep show: "How the Other Half Loves," 1976). Tita Joy has appeared in countless plays and musicals, written the critically acclaimed musical "Miong," and developed the immensely successful Repertory Children's Theater, where she has been working with wicked witches, dwarfs, boys made of wood, and magic beanstalks.

Chiqui Xerez-Burgos (first

Rep show: "The Merchant of Venice," 1995). Famous mostly for having the most misspelled name in local theater, Chiqui Xerez-Burgos is a familiar face on stage and screen. He joined Rep in 1995, apparently enjoying the experience so much that he waited a full 11 years to do it again.

"7 Ng Umaga" runs March 24-April 9 at Rep's Globe Theater at Onstage in Greenbelt I. Call 8870710 or 8919999.

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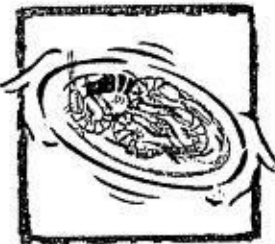
Handprint Fan, Libreng Pampapresko!



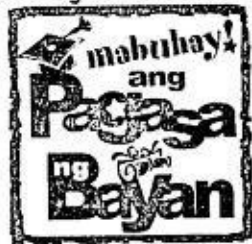
Welcome Drink, Libreng Pampalamig!



Stuffed Toy, Libreng Pampaaliw!

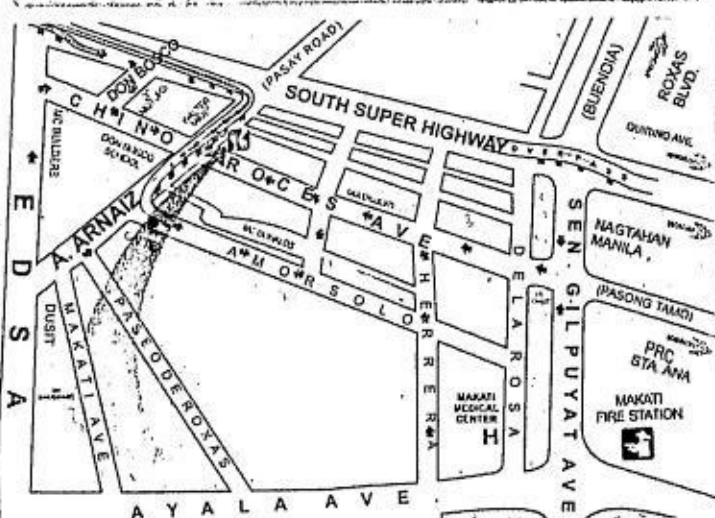


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